

CHRISTIAN UNITY  
ITS RELEVANCE TO  
THE COMMUNITY

# CHRISTIAN UNITY ITS RELEVANCE TO THE COMMUNITY

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By

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in the U. S. A.*



1957

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Cover Design

The symbol used on the cover seeks to portray the Churches, "oneness in Christ." The three elements used in the symbol are:

The circle, signifying "oneness"

The waving lines, signifying "the water of life"

The cross, signifying "sacrificial service"

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TO  
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# INTRODUCTION

A proper historical perspective in future years will probably compare the present era in the history of Christianity to the spiritual movement of the Reformation period. As that period emphasized a Christian's personal relation to God, this one brings the rediscovery of his relation to fellow Christians. We belong to each other and we must grow together. "The great fact of our time," as Archbishop Temple called this movement toward unity, has moved far beyond the vision of a relatively few prophetic souls to become part of the warp and woof of the ecclesiastic fabric. Yet, in spite of impressive achievement of practical expression of a unity in Christ which all know is fundamental, a full manifestation of such oneness among His followers is still more of a vision than a fact.

This little volume, the result of a series of lectures to the Association of Council Secretaries at Lake Geneva in 1955, presents a searching thesis that the most genuine evidence of the oneness of the members of Christ's body can be demonstrated in a community where Christian joins with Christian in common purpose in a manner which transcends all other loyalties. This may be called "the acid test" of all learned discussions and ponderous resolutions of Church bodies. Does the famous "man in the street" who lives in a particular community, see those who accept the name of Christian in a single spiritual unity, related to each other by common concern, aim, hope and service? Or does he see many persons who have other primary loyalties which determine their grouping in separate associations which only collectively are known as Christian? The author makes bold to imply that the phrase "oneness in Christ" has no true meaning unless there develops among Christians "oneness" in thinking, planning, speaking and acting; and quotes Stephen Neill in looking to that day when "all the local churches . . . were the local manifestation of a single redeemed people." We are challenged to consider whether we are yet "a single redeemed people," or a collection of groups of redeemed people merely with an increasing goodwill and co-operation expressed in the relation of these groups.

While only intending to give the philosophical setting for the remaining practical chapters of the book in dealing with present practice in the Church Council movement in America, Dr. Miller has faced us with a central issue. Is our much speaking of Christian unity anything more than an empty mouthing of "Lord, Lord" as long as our loyalties in determining action are primarily to our own communions and secondarily to the whole body of Christ instead of the reverse order, which obviously would mean the realization of true "oneness in Christ."

A fresh and promising approach to this whole problem is also presented by stress upon the geographical community as the point of reference and object of consideration. Most arguments for church co-operation have been based upon subjective considerations. This volume embraces the thesis that effective Christian witness to the community, and the upbuilding of right relations within a community, should be the Church's goal. This can only be achieved by "a single redeemed people." To be divided into lesser groups, with attendant demands upon loyalties and divergence of specific aims, renders impossible a manifestation, through witness or service, of the fundamental unity and universality of the Christian fellowship, and renders equally impossible a proper ministry to the needs of the community. A true Christian unity must be effected, not for the sake of the strength or prestige of the churches, but for the assurance of an ability to serve the community as a full Christian fellowship should.

The acceptance of this functional view leads to practical consideration of program and structure. Problems which emerge lead eventually to the basic question of whether a denomination truly considers its operation as though it were the whole church or whether it recognizes its operation as only a part of the whole working body. Attitudes toward both denominational and co-operative church planning will be greatly affected by the answer which is given to that question. Decisions are being made daily in this realm. The chapters of this book on program, structure, and finance make further contribution to the careful discussion which must be conducted in the churches before achieving proper program projection. Survey indicates the central concerns of the churches' faith and life are worship, evangelism, education, social relations, and missions. Since these are common concerns there should be much more careful study of why the churches do not more fully unite in these activities.



In considering the answer to the problems raised by these various considerations, one must give careful attention to the growth of the Church Council movement, a phenomenon of American church life. This volume will aid in discovering the scope, the nature, and something of the achievements of the movement. Its publication raises the question as to whether world discussions of the nature of church unity have given adequate place to the actual experience in practical Christian co-operation which is found in American communities. It raises the question of whether we have as much real co-operation in church life as we think we have and as we truly want. And it raises the question of whether a more careful consideration of the relation of co-operative Christian endeavor to the life of the community would lead to some new decisions and actions. From this it is evident that in spite of containing charts, tables, and much information in other forms, this series of lectures, dealing to a great extent with practical questions for a professional group, opens up more discussion than it concludes. And that was probably the purpose of the author—for Christ's work will only be advanced effectively by those who are willing to have this gospel challenge their traditional patterns of thoughts.

There are many who believe that the next distinct advance in Christian unity in America will be made by bringing its reality into focus in the local community. The National Council of Churches has confirmed this opinion by formal action. Some will say this entails some curtailment of denominational sovereignty. Others will deny this, but affirm a uniting of denominational strengths to produce a much stronger type of Council of Churches community leadership is certainly required. The discussion will extend over many years, for true progress is always slow. This volume renders real service to this end, however, by centering attention on the community to be served and asking what relevancy our present organization and procedures have to such service. When outgoing service is the basic consideration instead of acquisitive institution building, we are always nearer to the mind of Him who came "to minister, not to be ministered unto" and who took upon Himself the form of a servant.

GLENN W. MOORE

Summit, New Jersey  
August 6, 1956

## NOTE

This treatise was prepared for the general seminar of the Association of Council Secretaries in June, 1955. The five lectures were subjected to the criticism of "workshop" sessions after each lecture. These workshops were participated in by executives in (a) state councils of churches, (b) councils in metropolitan areas, (c) councils in medium-size cities, and (d) councils in smaller cities and communities. The workshop panels included national denominational and interdenominational executives and executives of smaller denominational judicatorial bodies. The results of these discussions helped refine and modify the subject matter of this book in many ways, for which the author is sincerely grateful.

Acknowledgment is here given to those publishers and authors who granted permission to quote from their published writings, particularly to the Office of Publication and Distribution of the National Council of Churches for the use of certain organization charts in the Appendix, and philosophical principles which, as the author, I had included in *Growing Together—A Manual for Councils of Churches*, published in 1955.

To H. Robinson Shipherd I am indebted for the copy-editing of the manuscript and the proofreading and indexing. I wish to acknowledge the encouragement, the constructive suggestions, the critical examination of the manuscript, and the continuing inspiration of my wife, Maxine Semones Miller, throughout the preparation of this book.

Finally, to the Association of Council Secretaries and the Chairman of its Special Committee on Publications, the Rev. Frederick L. Reissig, I am indebted for encouragement and help in the publication of these lectures.

# CHRISTIAN UNITY, ITS RELEVANCE TO THE COMMUNITY

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### and DEFINITION OF TERMS

The purpose of this book is to bear witness to the relevance of co-operative Christian unity to the community. The testimony I shall present is based in part on reading and study, and in part on personal knowledge and observation. It is with a genuine sense of inadequacy that I accept this responsibility, for I realize that, while this is no judicial tribunal, each member of the Association of Council Secretaries is a personal witness for Christian co-operation and is dedicated to the cause of Christian unity. The accumulation of personal knowledge and experience, represented here, furnishes additional evidence that the churches we serve have in varying degrees attained a consciousness of their oneness in Jesus Christ. The thoughts that these discussions stimulate and the testimony that each of you may bear, either unuttered or expressed, will enhance our understanding of the nature and meaning of our task.

I ask you to consider the nature of the terms "Christian Unity" and "Community." I shall endeavor to indicate the sense of meaning in which I use them, with some indication of their historical, sociological, and ecumenical implications. In this setting we will then consider: Isn't a divided church irrelevant to "Christian Unity" and "Community"? If so, what is the relevance of a united Christian fellowship? We shall then consider some characteristics of the "new climate" that is favorable to Christian co-operation. In succeeding sessions, the direction our consideration of *relevance* will take is suggested by the terms "program," "structure," "staff," finance," and "relationships." Minor attention will be given to the questions of sovereignty, authority, and loyalty. The conclusion will seek to formulate the thesis of a functional theory of community organization that is based on the reality of "oneness in Christ."

The choice of subject for these lectures was made by the program committee for the Association. I believe it is opportunely

timed. The perspective of much of the current ecumenical literature either omits or evades consideration of the relevance of Christian unity to the community. A striking example of this fact was the program of the Evanston Assembly of the World Council in 1954.

The fact of co-operative Christian unity in the United States is demonstrated by the 959 state and local councils of churches, 2056 councils of united church women, 95 councils of church men, 2045 ministerial associations, and the National Council of Churches. One will find very meager scholarly treatment of this characteristic American ecumenical expression. In fact, the glorious history of the 100 years of co-operation represented by the Sunday School movement, by ministerial associations, and by their bearing on the development of the merged agencies, which formed the National Council of Churches, has not even been written. Curricular attention to these developments is generally omitted from theological education. A recent questionnaire study of the curriculum provisions made by theological schools in the ecumenical field showed that seminary courses being offered were largely concentrated on the "Faith and Order" phase of Christian unity. There was almost no specific study of the churches' experience, needs, and tasks in "life and work" that the American conciliar process exemplifies.

The deeper values Christian unity may bring to fruition center in the community. Stephen Neill rightly says that Christian unity is too urban and that its relevance to villages has hardly been explored. The whole movement is rootless until its meanings emerge within face-to-face geographical community relationships. In fact, I doubt whether our "oneness" in Christ can be genuinely felt and understood until we experience its meaning in the specific geographical settings in which Christians live and work and worship.

Let us first consider the meaning of the phrase "Christian unity," and the words "ecumenical" and "community."

## **1. Christian Unity**

Co-operative Christian unity is descriptive of the experience that Christians of the member churches share as they work together in councils of churches. This methodology has been sustained for many years, and has led us to where we are today. At

its best, the motivating power of this type of unity is found in the process of sharing. William Ernest Hocking has defined "sharing" as a process in which each participant is teaching, each learning, each with the other meeting the unsolved problems of both. Historically this sharing process began with individuals working together in a personal and private capacity. Though there is danger in generalization, I think we may conclude that this era is largely behind us. The era of Christian co-operation, in which the churches are now involved, is the era of the corporate relations of churches as churches. The Christian unity, which churches experience as they co-operate through a council of churches, leads to a sense of a wholeness that is composed of many elements. The resulting unity of thinking, planning, speaking, and acting implies oneness, especially of that that is varied and diverse rather than uniform.

Stephen Neill, in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, contends that "the unity of the Christian fellowship was experienced in life before it was defined or explained."<sup>1</sup> *Christ is one.* From the earliest beginnings Christ's followers "were felt to be one in him, sharing in a life derived from him." "All the local churches," in New Testament times, "with the rich diversity of their life, were the local manifestation of a single redeemed people."<sup>2</sup>

St. Paul, the "great theologian of the unity of the churches," selected as the image of this unity the church as the body of Christ. Stephen Neill points out that Paul, in I Corinthians 12, uses this image in connection with the doctrine of the spirit, the diversity of whose operations within the Christian fellowship is compared to the different functions of the "parts of the body." "Ye are the body of Christ and severally members thereof." "Diversity of operation should no more cause schism in the body of the church than different physical functions cause schism in the natural body." Again we find the same thought in Romans 12:5, except that here "we who are many are one body in Christ."<sup>3</sup>

At a still deeper level Paul, in Ephesians I:21-23, thinks of "body" as an organism. The body is that organic whole in which

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1. Rouse, Ruth, and Neill, Stephen Charles, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement (1517-1948)*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1954, p. 3. Used by permission.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

the Holy Spirit clothes itself in order to become visible, and through which He works. Again in Ephesians 4:15-16 Paul says, "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."

The relevance of this Biblical conception of Christian unity for our work in the community may even now be glimpsed, although through a glass darkly, and will become clearer, I trust, as we proceed to develop our thought. The more deeply the present situation is studied, the clearer becomes the necessity for understanding the nature of the churches' unity in Christ. J. H. Oldham said in 1936 that the primary question before the churches was whether they were, as separate bodies and in their totality, living and acting as the church of Christ. Archbishop Temple, in his opening sermon at Edinburgh in 1937, said that the "una sancta should declare itself," that is, the churches should manifest their unity "by helping each other in all aspects of their common task, and enter into full spiritual fellowship with each other." Lesslie Newbigin believes Christian unity to be: "A visible company in every place of all who confess Jesus as Lord, abiding together in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. . . . Its form is the visible fellowship not of those whom we choose out to be our friends, but of those whom God has actually given to us *as our neighbors*. It is therefore simply humanity in every place re-created in Christ. It is the place where all men can be made one because all are made nothing, where one new humanity in Christ is being daily renewed because the old man in *every* man is being brought to crucifixion through word, baptism, and supper. Its unity is universal because it is local and congregational." The co-operative Christian unity in which churches engage becomes a living testimony to their oneness in Christ and as such has relevance for every geographical community.

## 2. Ecumenical

Shall co-operative Christian unity be considered ecumenical? If so, in what sense may the conciliar process, at each geographi-

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4. Newbigin, Lesslie, *The Household of God*, New York, Friendship Press, 1954, page 14. Used by permission.

cal level of its experience, be regarded as a part of the ecumenical movement? These questions are hard to answer because the word "ecumenical," both historically and currently, has acquired varied meanings. W. A. Visser t' Hooft, although stating that "ecumenical" is generally understood to mean "that which concerns the unity and the world-wide mission of the church of Jesus Christ," proceeds to describe seven distinct meanings:

- (1) Pertaining to or representing the whole (inhabited) earth
- (2) Pertaining to or representing the whole of the (Roman) empire
- (3) Pertaining to or representing the whole of the church
- (4) That which has universal ecclesiastical validity
- (5) Pertaining to the world-wide missionary outreach of the church
- (6) Pertaining to the relations between and unity of two or more churches (or of Christians of various confessions)
- (7) That quality or attitude which expresses the consciousness of and desire for Christian unity.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. Visser t' Hooft cites many examples of the usage of the term "ecumenical." An understanding of the varied usage of the term will often make for clarity. I shall quote several illustrations of the use of the term when pertaining to co-operative Christian unity in the community.

The first instance of record, where the term "ecumenical" was used to indicate an attitude, was by *Pastor Adolphe Monod* of the French Reformed Church. It occurred in London at the Constituting Assembly of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846, when he thanked his British brethren for their "fervor of piety" and their "ecumenical spirit." He was thanking them for their "sense of already belonging to a world-wide unity of the church of Christ which transcends national and confessional differences."<sup>6</sup>

*Henri Dunant*, founder of the Red Cross and a Y. M. C. A. pioneer, conceived ecumenical to mean "the attempt to propagate that ecumenical spirit which transcends nationality and language, denominations and ecclesiastical questions, class and profession." Elsewhere, as quoted by Clarence Shedd, Dunant shows that ecumenical means "that Christians of different denominations

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5. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement (1517-1948)*, Rouse and Neill, p. 738.

6. Rouse and Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement (1517-1948)*, p. 738.



must unite in love, associate with each other, and work together in charity for the glory of God, while maintaining their individual liberty, and even defend, if necessary, but with tolerance and charity, their personal points of view and their particular religious convictions.”<sup>7</sup>

*Hermann Plitt*, a German Moravian, described the witness of the Moravians and the Evangelical Alliance as an “ecumenical witness.” This was in 1879 at Basle. Dr. Visser t’ Hooft explains that “ecumenical was used with reference to a consciousness of the Church Universal and to the essential unity of its various branches, and not merely to the fact of extension in space, or of validity accepted by the whole church.”<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, we find in the report of the Basle Conference in 1912 that Archbishop Soderblom spoke of the “ecumenical attitude” of Gustavus Adolphus.

The Oxford Conference in 1937 declared: “The term ‘ecumenical’ refers to the expression within history of the given unity of the church; the thought and action of the church are ecumenical in so far as they attempt to realize the *una sancta*, the fellowship of Christians who acknowledge the one Lord.”<sup>9</sup>

Since 1937, ecumenical has been used in “both the traditional sense of *concerning the church as a whole* and in the modern sense of *concerning the relationship of different churches*,” or, again, as “*expressing the consciousness of the wholeness of the church*.”<sup>10</sup>

More precisely, when the co-operative work of the churches is characterized as ecumenical, one is expressing the nature of the modern movement for co-operation and unity, which seeks to manifest through witness and service the fundamental unity and universality of the Christian fellowship. The Christian ecclesia is the organic expression of this ecumenical fellowship within time and space. The Christian kononia is the expression of this ecumenical fellowship that is timeless and eternal.

Does such Christian unity have relevance for your community? Before attempting to explore answers to this question, may we consider what is the meaning of “community”?

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7. *Ibid.*, p. 738.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 738.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 740.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 740.

### 3. Community

"Community" has many meanings, both in common usage and in its sociological and psychological context. As earlier used in the literature of the social sciences, "community" meant a specific geographical area with certain definable boundaries, wherein dwelt persons with mutual social, economic, cultural, educational, and political interests. E. C. Lindeman, in his article in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, contrasts a community as *structure*, and a community as *process*. As structure, "community designated a geographical area with definite legal boundaries, occupied by residents, engaged in interrelated economic activities and constituting a politically self-governing unit."<sup>11</sup> Thus conceived, the community in which I make my home may be described as Colonial Heights of Crestwood, in the city of Yonkers, County of Westchester, an integral part of metropolitan New York City, of the state of New York. When describing this community to a German friend, I would of course have to add, U. S. A. "Community" may at times be used to describe the more limited or the most comprehensive geographical community structure.

The newer conception of "community," on the other hand, is derived principally from ideas of process. "The social scientists interpret social processes in terms of human nature; the dynamics of society were seen to reside not in its structure but rather in the interests, wishes, desires, and purposes of individual human beings interested with other human beings in varieties of social groupings."<sup>12</sup> These are the processes that inhere in the psychological aspects of "community."

Arthur E. Morgan, in his book *The Small Community* says that "a community is an association of individuals and families that, out of inclination, habit, custom, and mutual interest, act in concert as a unit in meeting their common needs."<sup>13</sup>

Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist, says that "community" consists of the natural, spontaneous, organic relations of people as they develop in the course of living, growing out of mutual affection, acquaintance, custom, and tradition.<sup>14</sup>

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11. Linderman, E. C., *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, article "Community," p. 102.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

13. Morgan, Arthur E., *The Small Community*, Harper, N. Y., 1942, p.

20. Used by permission.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

*Mac Iver* defines "community" as "a group of human beings settled in a fairly compact and contiguous geographical area, and having significant elements of common life, as evidenced by such factors as manners, customs, traditions, and modes of speech."<sup>15</sup> A community does not exist because of direct formal planning, but rather because of the spontaneity that arises from direct personal acquaintances and relationships in a spirit of fellowship.

*Brunner* and *Hallenbeck* emphasize that "a social group of any size, whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and have a cultural and historical heritage" is a community. Their definition recognizes both the geographical or territorial element in determining community, and the fact that it is human beings who make the community what it is.<sup>16</sup>

A common background of experience, mutual memories and associations, and common aims, hopes, and aspirations shared within the day-to-day associations of men and women and boys and girls are the ingredients of community, realizable preferably within a given geographical context. For, as *Walter Scott Athearn* so aptly observed, common habits, common attitudes, common knowledge, and common ideals are the bases of community life.

The extent to which these common associations have been acquired by the residents of a geographical community illustrates the primary relevance of Christian unity. The cogency of this observation is demonstrated, I think, by the theology of community. May community, as a geographical entity and as a psychological reality, possess a theological basis, which has been generally overlooked? I believe there is a theology of community. My study and research in this area has revealed limited but helpful writing thereon. The most helpful material I have found is:

First, a lecture by the Rev. John MacIntyre, principal of St. Andrew's College, Sydney, Australia, published in the December 1953 issue of *The Coracle*, the journal of the Iona Community, Scotland, under the title "The Theology of Community." Dr. MacIntyre examines the theology of community, as suggested by the three following statements:

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15. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

16. Brunner, Edmund deS., and Hallenbeck, Wilbur C., *American Society; Urban and Rural Patterns*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1955, p. 158. Used by permission.



- (1) "The idea of Community has already become the vehicle of theological thought, a contemporary form of theological expression, to an extent which is not always appreciated.
- (2) "The idea of Community has brought about a new and closer association of our relations to God and our relations to our fellow-men.
- (3) "This new and closer association seems to require a more determined endeavor to discover the right metaphor or analogy, for its fullest description and for its completest implementation, than has hitherto been made in this connection."<sup>17</sup>

One inescapable implication of the theology of community, Dr. MacIntyre says, is a "new conception of our obligation to the natural world. . . . Our duty to our neighbor is a duty to him in the material situation in which he finds himself,"<sup>18</sup> namely, the natural part of the geographical community."

Second, the unpublished report of *The Study of Christian Education*, Chapter XII, entitled "The Community Approach to Christian Education," 1947, under the chairmanship of John W. Harms. This report considers "the basis of the churches' concern for the community." The committee believes that the community concern of the churches is rooted:

- (1) In the nature of personality
- (2) In the structure of social relations
- (3) In the nature of God; His love, His fatherhood, His immanence and transcendence
- (4) In the application of Christian ethic to life
- (5) In the nature and mission of the church.

This section of the report concludes with this penetrating observation: "In all its thinking and the proclamation of its message, the church must build upon the reality of *community* even as it does upon the reality of the individual. Certainly the church cannot deal with the great issues of evil, sin, guilt, and salvation with anything less than a Gospel that is as relevant to the nature of the community as it is to the nature of the individual."<sup>19</sup>

We need to formulate the Christian doctrine of community. Such a doctrine, while embracing many of the elements listed

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17. *The Coracle*, December 1953, p. 3.

18. *The Coracle*, December 1953, pp. 11 f. (adapted).

19. Harms, John W., "The Community Approach to Christian Education," 1947, Chapter XII. Used by permission.

above, would include God as Creator of the world, as well as man and all things. The *given* comes from God's hand to man. The Biblical basis for such a doctrine is found in Genesis 1:1-31: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And God said: Let there be light . . . and God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters. . . . And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear. . . . And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate day from night. . . . And God said, Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures. . . . and God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures. . . . And God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man, in our image, after our likeness. . . . And God saw everything that he had made and behold it was *very* good."

These acts of God the Creator are the given features of community, primarily in its geographical sense. The geographical community is presented or bestowed. The community is given in a manner similar to the blood ties of one's family, or again, similar to one's name, bestowed at birth. The ingredients of earth, sky, sun, moon, stars, water, the seasons, climate, mountains, plains, trees, desert, animals, man, or their absence, are among the *given* factors of community. They all help shape man's destiny, within the context of a geographical community.

May the "Kingdom of God" as portrayed in the Lord's Prayer suggest the epitome of the theology of the community? When man's life becomes his highest prayer to contribute to the Kingdom's realization in his communal relationships, he becomes a partner with all God's children who dwell together in community.

The story is told of a transcontinental traveler who stepped from the train to the station platform at a station in Wyoming. Walking over to a native sheepherder, he asked: "Mister, what is the name of this community?" The local resident, not very well educated, replied: "What do you mean by community?" The traveler, somewhat nonplused, replied: "A community is a place where people dwell together happily and share in a friendly way all their needs and pleasures." "Mister," replied the native, "This here air no community. It air jist a place."

This homely rejoinder points toward the irrelevance of a divided Protestantism for Christian unity and community. A principal contribution of the churches to community is to nurture

the vision and idealism of the community, and to vitalize that spiritual aspiration that gives to life its true quality. The character of the citizens of the community depends on this spiritual nurture. But the divisive character of Protestantism, unassisted by the conciliar process, often leaves the community impoverished, because it receives no adequate spiritual nurture.

Arthur E. Morgan, in his book *The Small Community*, suggests that the churches of the community have not been altogether an asset. "The claims of the several denominations to be unique guardians of the truth and receivers of true revelation made it natural for each to compete with the others for loyalty and tended to intolerance. That tendency to competition and to isolation has been one of the most divisive forces in American communities."<sup>20</sup> Again, he observes that "one of the most disruptive influences in the American community has been the competition for loyalty of different religious groups. Each has tried to create a dominant loyalty toward itself, somewhat regardless of loyalty to general community interest. Community possibilities never can be realized so long as any group or groups claim a monopoly of truth or wisdom. Unity of the whole community can result only to the extent that claims to unique authority are given up. We can see how Mohammedan and Hindu in India have prevented unity through the centuries, by each claiming to have the one true faith and indoctrinating children so deeply that they feel it would be a sin to doubt that claim. Yet our own indoctrination may be so deep that we may be offended by the suggestion that the cases are similar."<sup>21</sup>

Into this situation, more acute in one geographical community than another, is projected the question of the relevance of co-operative Christian unity.

#### 4. Relevant

Relevant, as used here, means "so close an association with the matter in hand that it cannot be dispensed with." The fact that the character of a people is dependent on their faith in a Christ-like God, whose nature itself guarantees the validity of their moral and ethical ideals, makes Christian unity within the American community situation so germane and appropriate.

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20. Morgan, Arthur E., *The Small Community*, p. 264.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

A united Christian fellowship is relevant to community need. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Christians perceive more clearly the reality of their oneness in Jesus Christ. Though the separated churches, as congregations within a given geographical area, need to be co-operatively gathered together for effective witness and action, there is emerging from within a consciousness that in Jesus Christ Christians are already one. The unity which they possess in Him is itself deeper than their denominational divisions. There is a wholeness and a universality within Christendom which cries for recognition, visibility, and witness in every geographical area where two or more churches exist. This ecumenical fellowship, as the *ecclesia*, needs to be expressed through a council of churches at all levels; this ecumenical fellowship, as *kononia*, needs to be identified consciously as a timeless and eternal fellowship, impinging on, giving direction to, and meaningfully intermingling with Christ's followers of all the ages. The memories and the hopes and aspirations, past and future, stress the relevant reality of Christian unity for community!

## **5. Triumphantly United**

Frequently, one is asked by laymen who know our work: "Why don't the churches get together?" Today, thank God, we may answer: They are getting together in a magnificent way through community co-operation. The laity long to hear, and to understand, and to help further this ecumenical reformation. And the climate, within which Christian co-operation now flourishes, becomes more favorable year by year. The forces that impel the churches to greater unity are not man-made, but God-given. As one of the great ecumenical declarations has observed: "We cannot make the church one. But Christ has made us His own. And He is not divided. As we come closer to Him, we find one another!"<sup>22</sup>

Today, in contrast with the mood of an earlier period within Christendom, there is an almost universal sanction for vital Christian co-operation. As examples, consider the following facts:

- (1) At Amsterdam in 1948, when the World Council of Churches was born, the churches said: "We intend to stay together."

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22. "The Message," World Council Assembly, Amsterdam, 1948.

- (2) At Cleveland in 1950, when the National Council of Churches was born, the churches said: "In the Providence of God the time has come when it seems fitting more fully to manifest oneness in Jesus Christ our Divine Lord and Saviour."
- (3) At Denver in 1952, the churches said: "The Christian witness is one witness. It is the testimony of persons who have participated in the joyous experience set forth in the Gospel. It brings to bear upon a secular society the impact of the Christian community. This is one task."
- (4) At Evanston in 1954, Bishop Hans Lilje's first report to the Assembly on the main theme "Christian Hope" said: "We intend to grow together." And growth, as every farmer and gardener knows, must have local nourishment.
- (5) At Austin in 1955, the Texas Council of Churches said: "The final test of this whole ecumenical movement is at the local community level. Here live the unchurched. Here juvenile delinquency increases. Here secular education calls for a Christian foundation and interpretation. Here family breakdown occurs. Here racial discrimination and group tensions persist. Here in the community Christ must be embodied by His churches to go about His work of healing and redemption. This means that every church which would share effectively in embodying Christ in its community must erect its relationships with and its responsibility to its *religious community* into a place comparable with its relationships with and its responsibilities to its *religious communion*. The local church's relationships with its neighboring churches in its community and its relationships with the scattered churches of its own communion are not in conflict. They enrich and reinforce each other. Local churches best effect these essential neighborly relationships through community, city, and county councils of churches."<sup>23</sup>

These ecumenical declarations are a powerful reinforcement for local co-operative effort. By some mysterious alchemy of mind and heart, the churches are growing together.

## 6. Translating Ecumenical Goal into Community Fact

Since the churches are one in Jesus Christ they ought to act as if they are one in the community. When every local congre-

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23. Message to the Churches of Texas, adopted January 7, 1955, Texas Council of Churches.

gation acts as if it is a genuine part of the Christian fellowship of the whole inhabited earth, we shall be approaching Christendom's present understanding of the ecumenical goal.

What does this mean from the perspective of the local community? As the Biennial Message of the National Council declared at Boston in 1954: "While we have begun to sense our unity, we are not always clear what practical obligations it places upon us. We have the vision of unity as a principle and now we must translate it into actual practice. We must provide the best pastoral and lay leadership for the unified community programs of the local council of churches." The message the World Council of Churches issued at Evanston in 1954 provides the following community perspective: "Is your church seriously considering its relation to other churches in the light of our Lord's prayer . . . that they all may be one? Is your congregation, in fellowship with sister congregations around you, doing all it can do to insure that your neighbors shall hear the voice of the one Shepherd calling all men into the one flock? . . . Is your congregation a true family of God, where every man can find a home and know that God loves him without limit?"

The ground in which to test the reality of an ecumenical faith is found in the community where people live and work and worship. One cannot be realistic, however, without pointing out that the Christian unity movement's greatest failure, in spite of many positive achievements to the contrary, is the local community. The continuing competition among struggling churches of different denominations, and not infrequently of the same denomination, is a scandal. Just as the local community reveals whether a man is a follower of Christ in his social, family, and economic relations, so does the local community reveal the validity of a Christian's ecumenical commitments.

Christian unity proposals may receive enthusiastic support when they are stated in generalities and universals. When these generalities and universals are reduced to particulars with special relevance to local parish and community life, the expected general support may fail to materialize. Why is this true? Is it not because the relevance of Christian unity to the community has not been clearly understood? Experimentation and participation in study and action are now imperative. General ecumenical sanctions must be tested in the crucible of community experience.

This testing requires the fullest ecclesiastical and conciliar backing.

The General Board of the National Council gave evidence of its understanding of this fact by the adoption of its Policy Statement on Strengthening Christian Co-operation in States and Local Communities. This statement was issued for the consideration of the plenary bodies of the thirty member communions of the National Council of Churches for their study and appropriate action.

- (1) How may communions encourage their congregations to co-operate with each other?
- (2) How may denominational program emphases be projected simultaneously in order to enhance their community impact?
- (3) How may the areas of work of the churches be so classified as to indicate which are primarily denominational, which interdenominational, and which are both?
- (4) How may the major special day and week observances, commonly accepted among the churches, become an integral part of the denomination's program?
- (5) How may the co-operative work of the churches be presented as an integral part of the denomination's accomplishments through its official meetings, printed literature, and reports?
- (6) How may congregations and denominations be encouraged to pay their share of the cost of their co-operative work at the respective geographical levels?
- (7) How may congregations be encouraged to carry an appropriate notice on their weekly bulletins stating the relation each sustains to the local, state, national, and world councils of churches?

This action by the General Board of the National Council of Churches in May 1953 has already had beneficial results in a number of cases. (The implications of these areas will be introduced from time to time in later stages of our seminar work.) I am persuaded to believe, however, that communions need to go much farther in their efforts to make co-operative Christian unity relevant to the community. This conviction is a composite of faith and hope. It is similar, I think, to what Emil Brunner affirms in another connection in his book *Eternal Hope*. Those who labor to make the oneness of the churches in Jesus Christ

visibly real in the community are motivated by a "faith in which hope is rooted," a "hope which is implicit in faith," which is "at the same time a matter of experience"—not experience of the senses of perception, but experience of true personal encounter. To require proof in the sphere of personal encounter means to overlook the essence of one's personal experience.<sup>24</sup> The hope that springs from faith is so much a part of the life of faith that one must say: "The future for which it hopes is the present in which the believer lives."<sup>25</sup> To understand this more precisely is the central thrust of our subject, "Christian Unity, Its Relevance to the Community."

The great new factors of hope and faith in the present situation are that the relevance of the churches' co-operative work is now a genuine concern of many churches and is germane to their deeper purpose in the community. What *relevance* does this concern of the churches, for co-operative Christian unity in the community, have for program? This will be considered in Chapter II.

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24. Brunner, Emil, *Eternal Hope*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1954, p. 30. Used by permission.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 30.



# CHRISTIAN UNITY, Its Relevance to the Community: FOR PROGRAM

*Introduction.* The churches are getting together in communities all over America. This co-operative Christian unity has deepened their faith in Jesus Christ, and freed them for an enlarging fellowship of worship and work and service. This ever-expanding field of co-operation is the churches' present-day strategy. The co-operative activities of the churches are no longer limited to their secondary and marginal interests, as was often true in earlier days. Today the churches are beginning to realize that the central concerns of their faith and life are their common concerns. These central concerns in evangelism, education, social relations, missions, and worship are leading them in togetherness—

- (1) To proclaim the good news of the Gospel of Christ.
- (2) To nurture a Christlikeness in human behavior and conduct.
- (3) To permeate the environment with Christian influence and personality that it may be more hospitable to Christlike living.
- (4) To minister to the sick, the imprisoned, and the needy in the spirit of love.
- (5) To make the Christian conscience articulate and vocal on moral issues.
- (6) To seek, through fellowship, study, worship, and service, a theological and Biblical foundation for their faith, that the individuals and the community may alike become endued with His saving grace and power.

These objectives are for many geographical communities no longer simply wistful aspirations; they are witnessed unto and experienced as facts of current Christian life.

The Protestant problem of diversity need no longer stand as an inseparable barrier to effective Christian unity. John Dillenger and Claude Welch have an enlightening comment on the

problem presented by the multiplicity of Protestant Orthodox communions. "At the center of the reformation faith was the new acknowledgment of the intrinsic authority of God's self-revelation, i.e., the discovery that faith can begin only as Jesus Christ attests Himself to the human soul in which His word is made alive by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Protestant's religious convictions are reached only in personal responsible decision; they are his response to the word of God in Christ; they are the convictions required of him. This is not the same thing as 'the right of private judgment,' for that is not a peculiarly religious conception and suggests a kind of absolute sovereignty of the individual which is quite foreign to the reformation idea. *The Protestant idea of faith does not entitle a man to believe what he pleases, for every man must think in accordance with the truth.* But the principle of the reformation is that the truth of the Gospel is made known to faith by the inward working of the Holy Spirit. This truth is therefore received only in decision, in personal acceptance, in an obedience to the word of God which no man can perform for another."<sup>1</sup>

It is fair to point out that denominational divisions have resulted more from the demand for conformity within each institution than from simple diversity of belief. The nonconforming groups were forced to organize separately. We, who are called by the Holy Spirit into an ecumenical ministry, know that completely separate denominations may have "very similar theologies and rituals and be essentially one in spirit and intent." This inner spiritual discovery is a profound concomitant of the conciliar process. Those who live in geographical communities need to know each other well, at the well-spring of life's meaning and purpose. The spiritual values conveyed by the Gospel of love are thwarted by a sectarianism that prevents true community and communication.

Is it not in this connotation that Christian unity has its true meaning? By working together co-operatively, in humility and devotion to Christ, Christians find one another. As population mobility increases, congregations of worshiping people are composed of adherents to many denominations. They soon discover that in the deeper levels of their faith in God, in Christ, in man, in the Bible, in the nature of the social order, and in immortality,

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1. Dillenberger, John, and Welch, Claude, *Protestant Christianity*, Scribners, New York, 1954, p. 267. Used by permission.

they have a unity deeper than they ever dreamed. Similarly, as the officers and representatives of congregations seek to understand what God wants His children in His churches to do together in His communities, they sense their oneness in Him and their mutual obedience to the leading of a Higher Power. This is what is meant, I think, when we say that the spirit of sharing is replacing argument; or when we say the ecumenical movement within Christendom cannot be accounted for other than that it is a clear manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit. God, the Holy Spirit, is leading His people to sense their unity in Him. What does He want His followers to do and to be as they work together in communities? In seeking an answer to this question, we shall find the central relevance of Christian unity for program. Our endeavor will be: To analyze the present chaotic program situation; to examine some contributory causes; to lift up certain pertinent program facts and trends; and then to explore together ways in which the churches may provide a more co-ordinated impact on community life.

### **1. The Current Chaotic Program Situation**

The word "program," as I shall use it in this lecture, has two pertinent connotations. "Program" is first a proclamation, and second a plan of future procedure. Protestantism's lack of Christian unity in many geographical communities (this is particularly acute in rural America) is a proclamation that constitutes a tragic denial of the churches' oneness in Christ. While the human community in the Western World has disintegrated more completely than ever before, and the new technologies and instruments of living reach out horizontally, the divided character of the small community, religiously, is ill equipped to furnish the height and depth of spiritual community that man needs. The divided character of Protestantism (until it is strengthened by co-operative effort) weakens and negates its witness to a united faith in a living Christ. Program, as a plan of future procedure, however, is our chief concern. There is no shortage of program suggestions as churches plan their future activities, but their superabundance and generally unco-ordinated character present serious problems.

The General Board's Committee on Program and Field Operations has been studying the situation with a view to proposing suggestions for a clearer and sounder field outreach policy.

A certain pastor was requested to list the multiple program appeals that crossed his desk. He replied: "This area of study has long been of vital concern to me. Many program suggestions were promptly filed in the wastebasket. I recall having received the following program material between September and Christmas: The interdenominational appeals concerned world-wide communion and world order from the National Council; material concerning legislative matters, bingo, and financial support from the state council; the Community Thanksgiving Service, the United Church Canvass, and financial support from the city council of churches. The denominational appeals included: a special offering for Korean Relief, a Crusade for World Order, a special membership and stewardship emphasis, a youth emphasis, a world service and advance specials, denominational support for a seminary, and another for a college, and a multitude of public relations releases from the area office. Then there were special program plans for the United Negro College Fund, the Japan International Christian University, and a school for delinquent boys." The pastor closed by saying: "I am sure these are only a drop in the bucket, but these made some impression on my mind."

An executive of a large metropolitan council of churches described the program situation as follows:

"One of the important functions of a council of churches is to be useful in a practical sense to the denominations and member churches. Sometimes, however, it is rather baffling. It seems as if we receive appeals to support programs from a dozen different sources at the same time. What I mean at this point, however, is not appeals from our local constituencies but from national denominational and interdenominational offices.

"We are now receiving not only information from the Broadcasting and Films Commission regarding programs which we should advertise and support on radio and TV but we are also receiving them directly from the Protestant Radio Center in Atlanta. In many ways we appreciate these offers, but in other cases are rather baffled by the number of them and by the overlapping aspects of many of them.

"In a like manner a few days ago information came regarding 'One Great Hour of Sharing.' Now we find it is no longer 'one hour' but 'various weeks.' No longer, therefore, are we able on a community basis to secure the effective use of publicity media which was possible when the denominational efforts more nearly

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2. Hunt, Clark, Pastor, Trinity Methodist Church, Albany, New York, 1955. Used by permission.

coincided. This greatly weakens the kind of help we can give each other when we work through a council of churches.

"For many years we have been interested in the potential values of a United Church Canvass. We look forward with great expectation to the day when most of our denominations would adopt a calendar year and would make possible thereby simultaneous Every Member Canvasses, perhaps in November. Instead of that, we now have in our area separate joint canvasses by the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Baptist communions. The values which could come to these denominations through a United Church Canvass appear either to be delayed or permanently lost. At least the possibility of joint action, joint inspiration, and joint publicity does not exist. Furthermore, the program of Religion in American Life cannot be effectively used as an 'umbrella' when our denominations tackle this common problem separately.

"But not only do we receive requests for participation in programs and activities from national offices, we are also receiving them through state offices including our own state council of churches. It would take a wizard indeed to be able to select from among the multiple state and national denominational and interdenominational appeals the programs in which we should collectively engage.

"Isn't there some way by means of which better co-ordination could be achieved so that both denominationally and interdenominationally we would become more effective in our total field program outreach?"

As one studies this situation, the need for a more co-ordinated program for Protestantism is apparent. The people who know each other well in a community generally do not now have an effective plan of program procedures.

## **2. Contributory Causes of Program Chaos**

What causes this situation? The causes are complex and diverse.

### *a. Parallel Denominational Program Development*

The program of work of the denominations is itself a complexity of many interests. The co-ordination of the program plans is partly secured through Plan Books or Handbooks or a Calendar of causes of the particular denomination. As long as programs are projected into the future along parallel denominational lines, there is considerable cohesion in national, judicatorial,

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3. Powell, William D., Executive Secretary, The Philadelphia Council of Churches, Philadelphia, Pa., 1955. Used by permission.

and board program projection within each communion. But when one introduces the factor of Christian unity in the community, parallel denominational program projection without reference to the program plans of other denominations makes for community chaos in program impact.

Charles Clayton Morrison, in his book *The Unfinished Reformation*, has a chapter entitled "The Churchism of the Denominations." He defines a denomination as "a part of the Church of Christ existing in a structure of its own and exercising by itself and for itself those functions which belong to the unity of the whole church of Christ."<sup>4</sup> The programs of co-operating denominations have been considerably influenced by their co-operative ecumenical endeavors, although these have generally been projected along parallel lines. While the Calendar of the Christian Year makes for notable co-ordination in program emphasis, and there is recognition of the need for long-range simultaneity in program projection so as to enhance community impact, the practical achievements to date are meager.

#### b. *Institutional Loyalty*

The ties of loyalty and affection that millions experience in their particular denominational families is a heritage of profound significance. There are values in this inheritance that are precious for each of us. The great discovery Christian co-operation brings is that, as these special insights are shared, the whole of the Christian fellowship is enriched and new spiritual power is released for Kingdom work. Who can doubt that the notable gains in evangelism across the last quarter century have been mightily influenced for good by co-operation? But at the same time further program co-ordination in evangelism, toward which these successful ventures point, awaits the enlarging vision of the churches' unity in Christ. Narrow institutional loyalties still stand in many communities as barriers to fuller Christian co-operation.

#### c. *Polity*

Most churches are governed by a Congregational, a Presbyterian, or an Episcopal church polity. The particular form of government influences program. It may generally be assumed that communions that have a Congregational polity will have a greater

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4. Morrison, Charles Clayton, *The Unfinished Reformation*, Harper, N. Y., 1953, p. 56. Used by permission.

diversity in program; those that have a Presbyterian polity will have greater program uniformity; while those that have an Episcopal polity will have the greatest uniformity in program. Since geographical communities, with the possible exception of the smaller population areas, will generally have one or more congregations representing each form of church government, the co-ordinating of their programs for community-wide impact is difficult.

#### *d. Diversity of Need*

Needs vary. The many causes for this variety of need include: the size of the community; its residential classification, such as rural nonfarm, rural farm, urban, inner city, suburban residence, and the no-man's land in between; the size and scope of community organization; the economic, cultural, racial, and regional population characteristics; and the mobility of people. These factors influence the outlook of people and tend to shape a community's personality. The general theological outlook likewise has significant regional variations. These diversities of community need have relevance for program.

#### *e. Partial Interdenominational Program Co-ordination*

The co-ordination of program within the National Council and its several units is well advanced. The co-ordination of program elements of the National Council with those of state and local councils of churches, however, has not progressed as far as the needs require. Until greater mutuality in program has been achieved, this absence of fuller interdenominational program co-ordination adds to current program complexity.

### **3. Program Facts and Trends**

#### *a. Greater Interest in Religion*

The current resurgence of Christian faith is a fact of great significance for co-operative Christian unity. There is a favorable climate within which to work. From the White House to the little rural cottage there is evidence that masses of the people believe in the "trustworthiness of God for those who confide in Him."

Take, as an illustration, the 1955 Easter announcement by the *Richmond News Leader* on April 10:

"The story of the Resurrection will ring out across the land

... from the high vistas of the Rockies to the quiet woods of New England. There will be colorful morning services in parks and stadiums, on mountain tops and canyon rims and waterfront piers, beside splashing waterfalls, in churches, theaters, cemeteries, and Capitol squares. As a striking example of the geographical community worshiping, consider the Winston-Salem, N. C., Easter Sunrise Service. Here a throng of 35,000 gathered in the Salem Square where Moravian Bishop J. Kenneth Pfohl for the 25th consecutive year intoned at sun-up: 'The Lord is Risen.' Then the crowd answered: 'He is risen indeed.' Then 500 musicians took up the theme antiphonally as the procession moved to the Moravian graveyard—'God's Acre.'"<sup>5</sup>

This is but one telling example of a community's faith, to which each of you could no doubt add your experiential counterpart.

*Newsweek* states that "American confidence in the Lord, if measured in terms of numbers, is no less than prodigious."<sup>6</sup> The church-going in America is the amazement of our English and Continental brethren. In 100 years church membership has increased from 16% to nearly 60%. But the numerical growth, according to *Newsweek*, has been overshadowed in recent years by the obvious vigor and scope of American religious life.

There is a resurgent evangelism. The *Catholic Digest*, in its survey of American religion, pointed out that 50% of all Protestants tried to win converts and 43% succeeded. But only 28% of the Roman Catholics tried and only 17% had any success.<sup>7</sup>

There are almost 33 million Protestants in Sunday school; our seminaries are crowded; church building breaks all records; stewardship as evidenced by benevolence giving stands at an all-time high!

b. *The population increase*, with its attendant flood tide of babies, has a vital bearing on Protestant program strategy. Between 1950 and 1955 the American population quadrupled the rate of its growth from 1940 to 1950. Because of this, church extension and adjustment needs require comity planning in an unprecedented manner. One of the lasting gains that councils of churches are enabling their constituent bodies to make is, that

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5. *Richmond News Leader*, April 10, 1955.

6. *Newsweek*, Mar. 28, 1955, "Resurgent Protestantism."

7. *Newsweek*, March 28, 1955.



fact-gathering concerning population trends has become a recognized prerequisite for effective church extension within the community. Increasingly these sociological data are shared unitedly by most of the churches of the community.

Communications impact is another factor that affects program strategy. Most of our great radio, television, films, and press contributions are tri-faith in their impact. The communications industries exhibit a readiness to respond to co-operative religious approaches. Two familiar examples are the National Advertising Council's practice of granting complete coverage for "Religion in American Life," and the One Great Hour of Sharing. Equally noteworthy was the TV coverage given in 1955 to the "Day before Easter" film carried by nearly 400 TV outlets. These facts are eloquent reminders that in "unity there is strength."

c. *Population mobility* is a characteristic symbol of an industrial economy. It makes for denominational cross-fertilization. This was the experience of the Lutheran and Reformed churches when the population movement into the German Ruhr led to the creation of the United Church in Germany. Now, in Westphalia, a new church constitution has been drafted to regularize membership interchange among Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches. A similar situation is widespread in many parts of the United States. The parish membership of many, perhaps most suburban Protestant congregations is now drawn from two or more denominational backgrounds. Inter-marriage across denominational lines is common, as are open membership and open communion.

The wastefulness of our churching becomes the more apparent as the needs for strategic church extension and placement are recognized. There simply aren't enough money and trained leadership to go around on the older patterns of small community churching. One recalls the Paul Douglass survey, in a typical state, which showed that in population centers of 2500 persons downward a third of all the churches were either dying or dead and another third were just stationary. Young people's fellowships cannot be denominationally maintained in thousands of small rural communities because of the sheer lack of enough separate denominational young people. The moral and spiritual undergirding of this type of community situation requires a co-operative Christian approach.

#### *d. Cross-Fertilization a Product of Co-operation*

We are all, no doubt, desirous of being resistant to the disease of "committee-itis." But should we be, really? If acquaintance brings confidence, and confidence brings trust, is there any other medium of operation as conducive to eradicating the barriers our denominational separation represents — as working, thinking, planning, and acting together — the committee process? Would you agree that one of the most significant contributions churches are making, through conciliar processes, is the work of hundreds of thousands of people in council committees, divisions, and departments? My "guesstimate" is that there are at least 500,000 Christian leaders now co-operating through committee processes in the various phases of national, state, and local council work. What a vast contribution this activity represents in the over-all cross-fertilization of the Christian community!

### **4. Newer Approaches to Program**

#### *a. Classification of Areas of Work*

The program chaos now prevalent is a stark reality. This situation weighs heavily on the local church, on the denominational and the interdenominational worker. Certain state and city councils of churches find the burden heavy in Christian education. Others find the program function most difficult in Christian social relations. The General Board, acting on a recommendation from its Committee on Policy and Strategy in May 1953, approved the statement that it recognized "the necessity of a stronger and more determined effort to encourage a more adequate expression of oneness in Christ by our congregations in local communities, and that it encouraged its member churches to study possible classifications of areas of work which ought to be primarily denominational, or interdenominational, or require both approaches." The importance of this study is suggested by a rather frequent assertion that councils of churches duplicate the work of the member denominations.

The Department of Field Administration requested the Research Department to study this problem. The data that follow are based on replies to a questionnaire sent to churchmen and churchwomen related to 19 state and city councils of churches in 14 states. The questionnaire consisted of a series of statements concerning the respective functions of the local denominational

organization and the local council of churches as both serve the interests of the local church, and the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement or whether they were undecided. Space was provided for comment.

Ten questionnaires were sent to the executive secretary of each of 19 state or city councils of churches, with the request that he have each of the following persons fill out one copy and return it to the National Council:

- (1) The executive himself.
- (2) The president of the council of churches.
- (3) The executive, a leading minister, and a leading layman of a major denomination.
- (4) The executive, a leading minister, and a leading layman of a minor denomination.
- (5) The president of the local council of churchwomen.
- (6) The president of the local council of churchmen.

The replies were received and tabulated by the Central Department of Research and Survey of the National Council. The "scores" for each statement were arrived at by letting "agree" equal plus one, "disagree" equal minus one, and an undecided answer or no reply equal zero. Thus complete agreement with a statement would mean a score of 99 for the 99 replies received and tabulated; complete disagreement would mean a score of minus 99; and a balance between agreement and disagreement would mean a score of zero. The answers showed a very large measure of agreement with the statements as presented, the lowest score being plus 44 and the average score 82. Of the 99 replying, 32 were laymen and 67 were clergymen; 88 were men and 11 were women. The 20 questions asked resulted in the following scores:

- ( 1 ) The denomination carries the major responsibility  
for preparing and publishing Christian education  
curriculum ----- 71
- ( 2 ) Community schools of weekday religious education  
should be planned and supervised by the council  
of churches ----- 90
- ( 3 ) Responsibility for leadership education and teacher  
training should be shared by the denominations and  
the councils of churches, with training schools set  
up under whichever auspices can provide the best

talents and resources for training teachers and leaders -----	79
( 4 ) The council of churches should provide for smaller denominations various resources (professional staff, library, training schools, etc.) that the larger denominations can provide for themselves -----	47
( 5 ) While the ministry of the churches in missionary and church extension fields is a denominational responsibility, there are a few specialized fields (such as public institutions, Government projects, migrant camps, temporary housing projects) where the denominations may request a council of churches to conduct a direct ministry in their behalf -----	97
( 6 ) While decisions as to the establishment, location, adjustment, and discontinuance of churches are a denominational responsibility, such decisions should always be cleared through the appropriate agency of the council of churches -----	74
( 7 ) The recruitment, training, and placement of ministers is a denominational responsibility -----	88
( 8 ) Communications with public officials and public agencies should be channelled through, or cleared with, the council of churches -----	44
( 9 ) Matters of social education and action that involve communications with the public and/or the judgment of the churches on public issues are more effectively dealt with through a council of churches, through which the churches can speak with a united voice -----	79
(10) Methods and standards of evangelism are primarily a denominational responsibility, but methods of evangelism that involve a general rather than a selective approach to a community (house-to-house canvasses, community preaching missions, etc.) are best done through the council of churches -----	90
(11) All matters of ecclesiastical polity, such as ordination, discipline, doctrinal statements, and so on, are exclusively the responsibility of the denomination -	94
(12) Fellowship among clergymen and lay Christians to deepen their common bonds to Christ and His vocation is the common responsibility of the denominations and the interdenominational agencies, within their respective spheres of concern -----	93
(13) Research, survey, and study are typically interdenominational responsibilities because their values are applicable to all denominations -----	87

- (14) Training in church history, church doctrine, worship, and the sacraments are primarily denominational responsibilities ----- 82
- (15) Church welfare work that is nonsectarian in service should increasingly be nonsectarian in planning, policy, and co-ordination, and should therefore come under the general supervision of the council of churches ----- 76
- (16) Relationships with Catholic and Jewish agencies and organizations are best channelled through a representative Protestant organization such as the council of churches ----- 89
- (17) The council of churches should periodically bring together employed and volunteer personnel performing specialized functions in the church (church school leaders, youth leaders, presidents of women's groups, home mission workers, etc.) for the following purposes:
  - a. To share ideas and resources, and to study problems, techniques, etc. ----- 86
  - b. To develop a co-ordinated Protestant strategy and plan for the most complete expression of this function in the city or community ----- 87
- (18) The use of the mass media by the churches of a local community (radio, television, press) is most effectively accomplished through a common agency such as the council of churches ----- 91
- (19) The maintenance of permanent institutions of religion (churches, missions, Sunday schools), education (parochial schools, preparatory schools, colleges and seminaries), and welfare (hospitals, homes, etc.) is a denominational responsibility when these institutions are directly maintained by the churches ----- 87

A question (20) was also included as to whether the local denominational organization or the local council of churches is the better medium through which the local church may be related to state, national, and world councils of churches. While the local council of churches was indicated as the better medium twice as often as the local denominational organization by those who indicated a choice, the majority of respondents felt both channels of relationship to be important.

As one deliberates on this matter, it becomes clearer that communions and councils of churches are mutually involved in phases

of nearly every function. Consequently, as effective partners, the areas of responsibility of each need to be clarified. In general the following program areas were widely recognized as inter-denominational:

- Broadening and deepening the sense of Christian unity.
- Protestant-Orthodox public relations.
- Ministry in public institutions.
- Weekday religious education.
- Specialized leadership education.
- Ministry to temporary and specialized groups.
- Concerted community evangelism.
- Communication with public officials (legislation).
- Protestant social welfare.
- Community vacation church schools.
- Ecumenical youth fellowship.
- Educational activities for united church women, united church men, ministers, and young people.
- Community-wide services of public worship.
- Research and survey.

The following functions were widely recognized as of primarily denominational concern:

- Curriculum preparation and production.
- Missions and church extension.
- The recruitment, placement, and training of ministers.
- Methods and standards of evangelism.
- Ecclesiastical polity and doctrine, including ordination and discipline.
- Church worship and administration of the sacraments.
- Maintenance of the institutions of religion.

The inconclusiveness of the study is apparent. But the importance of the problem is characterized by the present program situation in the churches. It is likewise pertinent to determine which phases of the churches' co-operative program shall be emphasized by a local council of churches, which by the state council, which by the National Council, and which by the World Council.

#### *b. Delegation of Program Responsibility*

A serious weakness with which councils of churches are confronted at all geographical levels is the failure of the member bodies to decide what work they want to carry forward together.

In a very real sense, of course, the representative character of the work of councils of churches today is a kind of delegation of responsibility. But the time has come, has it not, when in order that Christian unity may be extended and deepened, the churches



should more specifically delegate certain areas of program responsibility to councils of churches? Within the local geographical community, each congregation should decide what part of its work it wishes to carry out through its council of churches.

For example, it might decide that weekday religious education, religious radio, leadership training, vacation church schools, ministry to persons in hospitals, orphanages, and old folks' homes, social welfare, legislative matters, and the community observance of great Christian festivals are program projects it prefers to carry forward unitedly. If so, an appropriate action would be:

"This church desires henceforth to carry forward unitedly, in co-operation with other evangelical churches, certain phases of its work in evangelism, church planning, and adjustment; public relations, including press, films, radio, and television; religion in education; social welfare; Christian social relations; Christian missions; ministry in institutions; and the community observance of the great Christian festivals. Believing that the co-operative phases of these functions to be effective must be undertaken by the churches working together, they are hereby delegated to the . . . . Council of Churches, and will be assigned as rapidly as the Council is prepared to accept them. This church further agrees to accompany these assigned functions with such financial support as is required to cover its share of the cost for this co-operative work."

### *c. Program Co-ordination*

There are many programs within any given denomination. There are many variations in the programs of the separate denominations. There are a multitude of interdenominational programs—national, state, and local. What relevance does the desire for Christian unity have for program? Surely co-ordination is needed, but how shall it be achieved? There is no simple or readily available answer to this need, but there are some encouraging trends:

- (1) There is emerging a recognition that emphases and slogans are not an adequate solution.
- (2) There is a growing recognition that co-ordination is an essential requirement for effective program building.

Across the years there have been many efforts to cope with this problem nationally. The interagency Committee on Simultaneous

Denominational Emphases on May 31, 1950, voted that the "purpose of this program (simultaneous denomination emphases) is the development within American Protestantism of united Christian action for the exaltation of Christ in the life of the world through agreement on a limited number of program emphases timed to coincide with the calendar of the Christian year, which would be simultaneously developed through a period of years by the several communions and state and local councils of churches."

When the National Council, after the Cleveland meeting, considered this action, it decided that the member communions were not yet ready to undertake simultaneity in program emphases. Consequently the Council formulated a co-ordinated program emphasis of its own for the period 1952-1953-1954 known as "Christ Calls to Mission and Unity." This emphasis was useful in enlisting a degree of simultaneity among certain denominations and Council units, and served to effect partial program mutuality as a follow-up in the fall of 1954. This emphasis enlisted the collaboration of certain units of the National Council and a number of state and local councils of churches and denominations.

The results, however, did not seem to warrant the choice of another emphasis for the triennium 1955-1957. Rather the issue of program co-ordination within the National Council is now being re-studied by Policy and Strategy to ascertain what kind of long-range program projection the member churches care to undertake together. When this has been decided, it is expected that the General Board's Committee on Program and Field Operations will be charged with outlining the objectives to be sought together in long-range program planning, and indicate where the responsibility should be placed for continuing program development and implementation.

The General Board's policy statement on strengthening co-operation in states and local communities suggested that the member denominations "project denominational program emphases simultaneously in order to enhance their community impact and to call attention to the major special day and week observances commonly accepted among the churches which are accepted as part of the denomination's program."

As the churches grow together co-operatively, they move toward certain common goals in the community. Differentiation in function will help. The designation of corporate functions to

appropriate council agencies will also move us forward. But mutual formulation of common long-range objectives ought to be mutually projected. May this necessary function become the primary objective that the constituent churches realize in their co-operative work on the various geographical levels? The active participation of the member denominations in the joint creation and direction of their common program activities, which they control, will make the bugaboo of a "super-church" impossible.

Program plans for co-operative Christian unity must be more inclusive than separate denominational program plans. This requires long-range planning. As Dr. Glenn Moore's report to the Policy and Strategy Committee of the National Council states: "Denominations exercising complete program freedom will naturally fit their plans into a larger framework which they themselves have formulated co-operatively with others." Denominational planning will thus be aided and its significance enhanced.

Councils of churches are instruments for united planning and action rather than an additional entity with separate purposes and objectives. They are a resource of ideas and knowledge and technique through which the wholeness of the churches' program impact on the life of the community and its people may be enhanced.

Dr. Glenn Moore's report suggests the following procedures:

- a. A consideration of the common basic objectives of the Christian bodies.
- b. A consideration of the trends in the society on which the churches desire to make an impact.
- c. A consideration of the issues that now face the churches.
- d. A consideration of related purposes stemming from basic objectives.
- e. A realization of resultant objectives.
- f. The projection of a program to attain these objectives.
- g. The planning of steps in implementation of the program.<sup>8</sup>

The aspiration toward which denominational program co-ordination points was aptly voiced by Bishop Charles W. Brashares as follows: "We seek a dynamic program which will bring each member of the churches into creative experience in relationship to Jesus Christ such as dedicated and trained Christians should

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8. Report to Committee on Policy and Strategy, Glenn W. Moore and J. Quinter Miller, September 18, 1953.

have in order that God can use them for a more perfect realization of His purpose in every area of personal and social living, and that others may be brought to join this active fellowship prepared to co-operate with all Christians toward achieving Christian world community.”<sup>9</sup>

Dean Liston Pope has stated: “It is highly unlikely that there will be one American Protestant church in the foreseeable future, and it is hardly desirable that there should be such a result.”<sup>10</sup> Dr. Pope predicts that American Protestantism, in the next twenty years, will enlarge its numbers by one third, and that the tendency to fragmentation will be reversed in the next generation.

Program is the future plans through which the churches do their work. “The heart of it,” Reinhold Niebuhr thinks, “must be the Gospel rediscovered.” Thus, he says, the Protestant church of America “may also find the resources for a created unity of the now fragmented portions of its total truth.”<sup>11</sup>

## **5. Co-operative Program Planning—**

If Pope and Niebuhr are seeing clearly, as I believe they are, what does this imply for the churches’ co-operative program strategy? The program of the churches must be co-operatively formulated and executed. Only thus may its community relevance be realized in unity.

We do not know fully how such program strategy can be effected. But there are many fruitful examples that point the direction for us.

### *a. The Local Community*

The focal point for program is the local community—tens of thousands of them. Our job is to initiate and help this endeavor. Where two or more of the churches’ lay and clerical leaders are gathered together to rediscover the Gospel’s meaning, there Christ will be in the midst. In one sense every interdenominational and denominational committee meeting can be such an encounter with God’s truth. A more sustained approach to program appraisal, evaluation, and planning consists of three-day program-planning conferences. The schedule for such confer-

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9. *Ibid.*

10. *Newsweek*, March 28, 1955.

11. *Newsweek*, March 28, 1955.

ences may include a Friday evening, Saturday morning, afternoon, and evening, and Sunday afternoon sessions. The officers, the staff of the denominations, and the chairmen and personnel of departments and committees of the council make up the conference membership. The program topics may include: general addresses on the subject, "What does God want His churches to do together in this community?" Parallel departmental or committee workshop sessions for evaluation and appraisal; the consideration of relevant denominational and national and state interdenominational plans, and the formulation of program activities; the summarization of recommendations at a Saturday afternoon or evening plenary session; an interpretation of major findings before a Sunday afternoon conference consisting of the pastor and chairman of the official board of each member congregation. Fellowship and inspiration are of course significant ingredients of the entire experience.

#### *b. The State Level*

State-wide program-planning conferences have many variations in schedule. A three-day conference composed of the communion executives and the officers and staff of state and local councils of churches has become typical. The topics are frequently grouped under some over-all theme such as, "The Ecumenical Movement as it concerns this state and its local communities." A program committee for the conference selects in advance the group of topics to receive special study. One state chose the following topics: Public Relations, Legislation, Christian Education, Ministry in Public Institutions, Planning and Adjustment, Program Co-ordination and Timing, Financing Co-operative Work, and Roman Catholic-Protestant Relationships.

Advance data were prepared bearing on each subtopic. Frequently a state communion or state council leader was chosen to outline the issues and needs involved. Also presented were relevant denominational and national interdenominational program plans. The discussion of each topic was brought to a close by the chairman with a summary of the discussion and the formulation of recommendations to the member denominations and to the council of churches. Members of the staff of the National Council have frequently been requested to serve as resource leaders. The obvious program co-ordination gain has come from the sharing in program planning, projection, evaluation, and scheduling.

### *c. The National Level*

The General Board's Committees on Policy and Strategy, for over-all strategic program directions, and on Program and Field Operations for the general synoptic thinking on "What does God want His churches to do together," represent the newer approaches within the National Council to this important phase of program projection. The degree in which communion and church council leaders can be usefully involved in long-range strategic program inquiry and democratically shared program analysis and projection may determine whether these objectives in program can be realized.

Co-ordination of the program plans of the units of the National Council, guided by an Assistant General Secretary for Program, has made significant progress. More and more all units related to a given area of work are encouraged to develop their programs as parts of a co-ordinated whole.<sup>12</sup> It is believed that overlapping, which at times may threaten, can be transformed through this consultative program administration process into creative action wherein each is strengthened by the other.

As a further illustration of general program planning, the following areas have been authorized by the General Committee on Program and Field Operations for specific attention:

- a. Theological groundings of positions in social education and action procedure.
- b. The churches and new religious movements procedure.
- c. Foreign Missions and ecumenical relations.
- d. National Council relations to faith and order problems.
- e. Analysis of church constituency.
- f. Analysis of influence of church in the community in comparison with other institutions.
- g. What kind of church building should we be building?
- h. Basic objectives and methods of Christian education.
- i. Service to orthodox churches.
- j. Alcohol education.

The research processes of the council will augment the work of the General Committee with pertinent factual data that are relevant to a particular subject as advance program-planning proceeds.

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12. Examples: Christian family life, racial and cultural relations, faith and order aspects of ecumenical relations, work camps, program relations of united church women, church world service's field operations, immigration and resettlement, consultations with the orthodox.



## **6. Field Outreach Policy**

This area is now being studied by a temporary subcommittee of the General Committee on Program and Field Operations. The committee has received for study the tentative field outreach policy which was prepared by the former Central Department of Field Administration. The committee will continue its analysis of the multiple program requests from the field, with a view to devising suggestions in field program operations that will have greater coherence and comprehensiveness in their application.

As a general principle, the National Council's field program outreach must be a flexible one, based on the interrelatedness of the national, state, and local interdenominational enterprise. State councils of churches are increasingly the responsible agents of the member communions for conducting their co-operative work. At the same time local councils of churches are the responsible agents of their member congregations for conducting their co-operative work. These facts the National Council recognizes, and therefore seeks to shape its field operations in such ways as to provide effective service at state and local levels.

## **7. Program Interpretation and Reporting**

Wherever Christian unity is truly based on the representative principle, the work that results becomes the work of the bodies represented. As this fact is understood, new vistas of interpretation open up. The member denominations have been requested by the General Board (Policy Statement, May 1953) to "present the co-operative work of a denomination as an integral part of its own accomplishments in its official meetings, printed literature and reports."

The average man and woman in the community knows almost nothing about his church's co-operative ministry. At the same time lay people sense the need for Christian unity, and they want an opportunity to share. For example, I received on February 14, 1955, an anonymous letter from Worcester, Mass., that illustrates the need for program interpretation and reporting. (See Appendix I, page 110.)

Unfortunately, the letter wasn't signed, so a direct reply was not possible. But this illustration can be multiplied by the thousands. Just where have we failed? There are doubtless many causes for church members' general lack of information about their church's co-operative work. Each of you could name a

number. A paramount cause is, I think, within the local congregation.

I believe that we as council executives and presidents share responsibility for this situation, and I further believe that the "Policy Statement" of the General Board was right in asking the member denominations to formulate procedures to help correct this condition.

We must make the representative principle effective by enlisting each local congregational appointee to the assembly of a council of churches as an interpreter, and furnish him with the information with which to put the message of Christian unity within the community across to his friends. May I suggest a possible procedure?

Each congregation is entitled to name its delegates to the assembly or annual meeting of its council of churches. The congregation should constitute its representatives as a standing committee or board on interdenominational co-operation. Each such committee should have a chairman. This committee should be docketed for a report at each meeting of the "session," "vestry," or "official board," summarizing the work the congregation has done through its council. Councils of churches in turn should endeavor to enlist each representative for participation in some functional area of its life, and provide the chairman of each congregational delegation with a monthly summary of the work accomplished.

Such a practice would increase congregational understanding, and help the congregation to experience the meaning of local togetherness in Christ. This eventually would broaden the base of ecumenical understanding that is so essential in the acceptance of the principle of shared responsibility.

This procedure can be adapted to communions in their state and national judicatories. In certain states the Methodist *Zion's Herald* incorporates a report of the work that a Methodist Conference carries forward through its council of churches (Minnesota is a good example). Nationally, the Disciples of Christ delegation, or the Presbyterian U. S. Delegation to the National Council's General Assembly, reports the work that the particular communion carries forward through its national council of churches. National, state, and local councils of churches, in turn, will be required to engage in a type of public relations assistance in order that the co-operative work done by the constituent church

bodies of a given council of churches may be interpreted factually with vision and human interest. These basic interpretative procedures can help make the co-operative program of the churches relevant throughout the life of the member churches.

Furthermore, such interpretation is in harmony with the philosophical principle of co-operative responsibility, which insists that the co-operative work of the churches belongs to the churches. They are therefore jointly responsible for those phases of work that by representative participation they have mutually authorized. The programs of the council, as thus formulated, constitute an integral part of the member churches' own programs and responsibilities, and deserve the full support of the member constituency. This principle of shared responsibility through voluntary co-operation is a foundation principle of ecumenical endeavor. The interpretation and reporting of the co-operative work accomplished should be the responsibility of and should permeate the public relations and reporting processes of the participating communions and communion agencies at the appropriate geographical levels.

## **8. Participation in Program Development**

In recent years the National Council has made wider provisions for state and local council participation in Policy and Program than is generally recognized. These provisions we shall examine when we consider relationships and their bearing on the present opportunities for mutual participation in program development throughout the conciliar process. But if Christian unity is to have its proper relevance in the community, state and local council participation in National Council program-planning should be increased. Similarly, there should be increased National Council participation in the program plans that churches carry forward together. This mutuality is a crucial factor in the matter of "relevance." What the churches do as they grow together co-operatively is interrelated at local, state, and national levels.

The local community is where the program of the churches must be finally tested. Therefore it is within the local community that the representatives of the churches must decide what God wishes to accomplish through their co-operative efforts. As denominational and interdenominational program-planning becomes more thoroughly co-ordinated, Christian Unity will grow in the community.

# CHRISTIAN UNITY,

## Its Relevance to the Community:

## FOR STRUCTURE

Christian unity exists today to a degree that would amaze our forefathers were they here with us to experience it. The reality of this fact can be attested to by each of us, if we recall the contrast between Christian unity when we were children and today. So marked has been Christian Unity's growth throughout Christendom that it would seem to be beyond human causation. It is doubtful whether the changes in the spirit and outlook of the churches with regard to their oneness in Christ can be accounted for save that the Christian unity now developing is a manifestation of the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of the churches.

### 1. Variety of Organizational Forms

This unity has many forms of expression. The variety of organizational forms is partly indicated by the names of the organizations under which the co-operative work of the churches is conducted in states and local communities. The tabulation<sup>1</sup> of these names, carried in the 1954 *Yearbook of the Churches*, falls under 37 different classifications:

Associated Churches -----	2	Council of Protestant Churches	4
Association of Churches -----	8	Council of Religion -----	1
Association of Evangelical Churches -----	1	Council of Religious Education	91
Bible School Association -----	1	Council of Weekday Religious Education -----	1
Christian Council -----	3	Federation of Churches -----	10
Christian League -----	1	Fellowship of Churches -----	2
Church Council -----	10	Inter-Church Council -----	52
Church Federation -----	8	Interfaith Council -----	2
Church Fellowship -----	1	Larger Parishes -----	5
Commission of Religious Radio-TV -----	1	Neighborhood Convention -----	2
Community Council -----	1	Protestant Association -----	1
Council of Christian Education	30	Protestant Church Council ----	1
Council of Churches -----	640	Protestant Council -----	5
Council of Churches and Co-operative Parish -----	1	Religious Council -----	1
Council of Churches and Christian Education -----	3	Religious Education Association	1
Council of Churches and Religious Education -----	1	Sabbath School Association ---	12
Council of Inter-Church Co-operation -----	1	Sunday School Association ----	6
		Sunday School Association and Council of Rel. Ed. -----	1
		Sunday School Convention ----	2
		United Churches -----	6

919

1. Tabulated by W. P. Buckwalter.

This shows a total of 37 different names then in use by 919 different agencies. Surely this situation exemplifies "unity within diversity" as revealed by the names of our current interdenominational structures.

This record shows more uniformity, however, when the following combinations are attempted. By bringing those names having functional similarity together, we find that there are:

640 Councils of Churches, 10 Church Councils, and 52 Inter-Church Councils, making a total of -----	702
91 Councils of Religious Education, 30 Councils of Christian Education, a total of -----	121
10 Federations of Churches and 8 Church Federations, a total of -----	18
12 Sabbath School Associations and 6 Sunday School Associations -----	18

In other words four similar categories represent 859 of the 919 agencies. This is 93.2% of the total number of co-operative agencies tabulated.

We may well ask whether such diversity in name serves a useful purpose. May it not represent the results of free and voluntary growth of an indigenous sort, the larger categories of which generally reflect the guidance that counseling pamphlets helped influence during the days the national agencies were functioning together through the Inter-Council Field Department, and since 1950 through the National Council of Churches?

At any rate, Christian unity in the community has acquired various types of structure. The form of the organization, the arrangement of the various parts, and the suitability of the structure through which to realize the objectives being sought by the churches will now be considered.

Christian unity requires a means of expression, because Christian unity is at times latent and unexpressed. It needs a medium through which it may become visible and operative in the life of the churches. Without some visible entity, the community has no effective means of communication. Organization, as structure, has visible reality. Organization, as process, is the dynamic functioning of the Christian fellowship.

## 2. Philosophy of Organizational Structure

A primary professional responsibility of members of the Association of Council Secretaries is to help establish and maintain suitable and effective organizations for expressing Christian unity

in the community. The success of the churches working together depends to a considerable degree on the working relationships of people. "Organization is that phase of administration," says Jay Urice, "through which people establish relationships by which they can work together most effectively. . . . more specifically stated, organization is the *process* and *structure* that defines and gives direction to the co-operative relationships of people in the formulation of objectives, policies, and plans, and in carrying them out."

"Both process and structure are involved in good organization. Industrial, business, and public welfare agencies have given considerable emphasis to structure, whereas private social agencies have tended to emphasize function and process in their organizational patterns."<sup>3</sup> Councils of churches have likewise tended to shape their organizational forms in accordance with function and process. But as we seek to understand the relationship of organizational structure and process, greater attention to form and procedure may not be amiss.

"An organization," Ordway Tead writes, "is a combination of the necessary human beings, equipment, facilities and appurtenances, materials and tools, assembled in some systematic and effective co-ordination in order to accomplish some desired and definite objective."<sup>4</sup> The form of these relationships is what we mean by structure. The purpose of the structure, in turn, is to fit the few or the many individuals together as they seek to work as skillfully and as productively as possible. Thus we see that structure is necessary to establish those relationships that will enable the representatives of the churches to strive together to achieve the purposes and objectives the churches seek to manifest through united effort.

This is the relevance Christian unity has for structure, is it not? The structure becomes a necessary means to an end. The churches, in seeking to manifest their oneness of faith in Jesus Christ, require a co-operative structure through which they may work together.

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2. *The Executive Role in Y.M.C.A. Administration*, Gren O. Pierrell, quoting Jay Urice, Association Press, New York, 1951, p. 110. Used by permission.

3. *Executive Responsibility*, Ray Johns, Association Press, New York, 1954, p. 52. Used by permission.

4. *The Art of Administration*, Ordway Tead, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1951, p. 101. Used by permission.



Most of us, as council of churches presidents and executives, begin with an organization that is already in existence. Very few of us have to create a structure from the ground up. At the same time scarcely any one of us is not constantly involved in revising, modifying, and perfecting the organizational patterns through which we work. This is done in order that there may be a suitable organization—suited to the needs the churches wish to meet through co-operative effort, and flexible so that the structure may be modified in accordance with changing needs as they arise.

### 3. Diversity in Patterns of Organization

The structure of a community organization bears a significant relationship to the functions it is designed to perform. Present experience indicates a wide variety of patterns of organization. The plan of organization has evidently been determined by social and religious forces within the community, unrecognized at the time. Though the tendency to make a careful study of the functions to be performed is gaining in momentum, failure to make such studies accounts for a number of the critical problems that have arisen. Next to competent leadership, adequate and suitable organizational structure designed to perform the desired functions is a critical factor in the co-operative enterprise of the churches.

History has contributed to structural diversity in the conciliar process. For example, the Brooklyn Division of the Protestant Council of the City of New York had its beginning 139 years ago in the Brooklyn Sunday School Union in 1816. The Church Federation part of our movement roughly corresponds to the 20th century, with local promotion designed to "establish branches of the Federal Council of Churches," continuing since its founding in 1908. The Inter-Council Field Department, when it began its *Field Organization Directory* in 1941, listed 247 state, city, and local councils. Today there are 959 such councils. But a factor, often unrecognized by historians, was the size and scope of the *Sunday school movement*, which, in thousands of cities and counties, had broken virgin soil preparatory to enlarging Christian co-operation. Walter Scott Athearn states that in 1917 there were "63 state and provincial Sunday School Associations; 2592 county associations; approximately 10,000 township associations; and many flourishing city associations. These associations employed 300 paid workers on full time"<sup>5</sup> and enlisted 267,307 vol-

5. Athearn, Walter Scott, *Religious Education and American Democracy*, The Pilgrim Press, Boston, 1917. Used by permission.

unteer workers. The 21,000 annual Sunday School conventions represent one of the early community expressions of Christian unity on which we build. Similarly the ministerial associations and the Councils of United Church Women, through their histories, contribute to variety in structure.

As new conditions and problems arise, old organizations must be modified and new patterns must be formed to meet new needs. Throughout the period from 1923 to 1940 interdenominational church agencies were merging their parallel organizations into councils of churches, the two primary streams of co-operation being (1) councils of religious education and (2) federations of churches. The nature of this structural development is set forth in *Protestant Co-operation in American Cities*, by Paul H. Douglass,<sup>6</sup> and *Community Organization in Religious Education*, by Hugh Hartshorne and J. Quinter Miller.<sup>7</sup>

Since 1941 the phenomenal growth in the number of councils of churches, the even more rapid growth in Councils of United Church Women, the beginning development of United Church Men, and the mounting awareness of the vital place Christian missions occupies within the whole range of the churches' co-operative work are descriptive of structural factors now relevant to organizational readjustment. Since 1950, when thirteen streams of interdenominational co-operation converged in the National Council of Churches, the pressures for state and local organizational readjustment becomes still more acute.

#### 4. One Comprehensive Structure

Christian unity has greater relevance for community when there is one comprehensive Protestant-Orthodox organization through which the churches' co-operative work may be carried forward. In the philosophy of Christian co-operation this is called the "principle of inclusiveness."

Protestant-Orthodox Christianity achieves a greater functional solidarity and effectiveness when it can work harmoniously together in one inclusive organization. The program of co-operative work in evangelism, Christian education, Christian social relations, Christian missions, public relations, pastoral services,

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6. Douglass, Paul H., *Protestant Co-operation in American Cities*, Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1930.

7. Hartshorne, Hugh, and Miller, J. Quinter, *Community Organization in Religious Education*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1932.

corporate worship, and the program projects of the general departments of young people, laymen, laywomen, and clergymen comprises the responsibly authorized Christian ministry of the co-operating churches. One all-inclusive council of churches, which will comprise all these services, is the ideal of this principle of inclusiveness. In areas where there are two or more co-operative agencies, the practice of living together in fellowship and working together on common activities has proved a most fruitful first step toward fuller co-operation. Constitutional provisions, though necessary, do not penetrate to the root of the problem. Sharing equitably in the administration of common activities to attain common ends, and then working together for these ends, are the best approaches for securing complete program and organizational integration.

The comprehensive agency should be the means through which the entire co-operative program of the evangelical churches may be administered at each geographical level of the churches' life.

The community relevance of Christian unity is at times obscured because of faulty structure. The historical references just noted partly explain the situation. Though forms of structure are not standardized, and must be designed to fit the needs of the particular situation, there are principles that apply to nearly every evolving situation. It may be useful to remind ourselves of these principles as the philosophical foundation for the particular structures that will follow.

## **5. Principles Determining Structure—**

### *a. The Representative Principle*

When the governing body of a council of churches is composed of the representatives that have been designated by congregations or communions, it is *representatively* constituted. When separate Christian congregations and communions wish to work with other Christian congregations and communions, they need a representatively constituted joint agency. The representatives chosen should consist of laymen, laywomen, youth, and ministers who are competent both denominationally and departmentally to think, plan, and act with authority to regulate the council-of-churches proceedings in accordance with its constitution and by-laws in behalf of the appointing bodies (congregations locally, communions in states). The decisions made and the activities con-

ducted thus become a co-operative expression of responsibly authorized Christian endeavor. By means of this principle of representation, otherwise separate and divided congregations and communions can perform common tasks: the work done together is the accomplishment of the co-operating congregations and communions. A council of churches, so constituted, is the representative agent of its member congregations.

#### *b. The Evangelical Principle*

Evangelical churches adhere to that interpretation of Christianity that emphasizes man's weakness to sin, Christ's saving power, and the need of a new birth and redemption through faith. The doctrinal phrase "Jesus Christ as Divine Lord and Saviour" is generally incorporated in the preamble to the constitutions of councils of churches. By means of such a statement in the preamble, the member churches seek clearly to establish the fact that they are partners in a Christian fellowship that is striving to witness to its faith in a God-like Christ and a Christ-like God. They also wish to show that it is their purpose to witness to their evangelical faith by means of the life and work of the councils of churches in which they share control. The full adherence to this evangelical principle requires that only those representatives may vote in the governing body of the council who have been appointed or approved by their respective evangelical congregations and communions. To be sure, provision is generally made for an affiliate relationship, short of voting membership, for those nonevangelical bodies that may wish to participate in certain activities and services. Such affiliated bodies do not appoint voting representatives to the governing body of the council of churches.

#### *c. The Principle of Affiliation*

There are a number of organizations that have a Christian purpose but that do not qualify as evangelical churches and hence are ineligible for membership in a council of churches; and these Christian organizations frequently desire to participate in the activities that member churches undertake together through their council. Each local or state council of churches shall determine the conditions under which such moral and religious agencies as desire to co-operate may do so. The principle of affiliation suggests that an advisory, consultative, or co-operative relationship,

short of full membership, may be established. Affiliated organizations of a moral and spiritual character may thereby be accorded the right to participate in conferences and other program activities, but such affiliation does not carry with it voting privileges in the governing body of the council.

d. *The Principle of Local Autonomy*

American co-operative Christianity consists of many autonomous units: neighborhood, city, county, trade area, state, and national councils. Each council of churches is locally autonomous; that is, the polity of its government is congregational: there is no authority or control exercised by one council over another. Each is free to determine its own type of organization, and to outline and carry out its own program, under the supervision of its member congregations or communions. Structurally, councils of churches are self-governing bodies. This principle of local autonomy recognizes the validity of the judgment of its constituent member bodies. Adherence to this principle implies the freedom to choose, to differ, or to modify present practices in order to become a part of a larger voluntary fellowship. There are, however, ties of fellowship among councils of churches that are of a functional, experiential, and spiritual character. The sense of fellowship that results from such voluntary association signifies a "togetherness of purpose" within the whole ecumenical family, even when a conclusion reached by a given council may vary from current ecumenical practice. This principle of autonomy enhances the local spirit of ecumenicity.

e. *The Functional Principle*

The discovery of the major problems of religious living, the search for solutions to these problems, and the development of organizational patterns through which these discoveries may be made and worked out, characterize the functional basis of community organization. When this principle is followed, "function" is the determiner of "structure." The needs for action and service that churches experience in their ministry in their communities become the determining factors in organizational growth and development. Adherence to this principle makes for creativeness; and there is always a down-to-earth quality in the programs that are developed. The work undertaken has a life-giving vitality, because the needs that such activity seeks to meet are recognized as actual and real. "Functions should determine structure, and *not* structure function."

#### *f. The Principle of Committee Integration*

The organization of the co-operative work of the churches along functional lines generally includes departments and committees. The larger councils may also provide for divisions and commissions. The administration of the work of such units is enhanced when those that have natural functional relationship are grouped as a department or a division. This practice helps to integrate the program of related units. The grouping of similar functions is also useful for staff specialization and supervision.

There is no single pattern in current practice; likewise, the words "division," "department," and "committee" are often used interchangeably.

#### *g. The Principle of Committee Membership*

The word "committee" means a person or persons to whom some trust or charge is committed. Councils of churches have committees of many types. The grouping of committees with similar functions into departments and divisions is a common administrative practice. What is the principle that should be followed by a council of churches in selecting persons to serve in its various committees, departments, or divisions? It is this: to select competent people from the constituent churches or communions to whom the member churches have entrusted similar functions or responsibilities. When this principle is applied, the resulting committee becomes a united body through which the work of the member churches may be co-operatively planned and executed; and adherence to this principle extends the work of local churches outward into the community. At the same time this procedure connects the work of a committee of a council of churches with the program committees and boards of the member churches and communions from which its committee membership is drawn. The operation of this principle makes for program co-ordination.

#### *h. The Principle of Lay Participation*

The influence, vision, and understanding of Christian laymen and laywomen are a principal asset within Protestantism; and of course this source of strength is needed in all effective Christian co-operation. The deliberative and program-building activities of councils of churches are strengthened by the degree in which laymen and laywomen, young people and clergymen share



their separate insights and experiences to develop the co-operative work of the churches. Business and professional men and women, homemakers, farmers, employees and employers, students, teachers, and church officials can contribute valuable experience and accept individual responsibility for many program and administrative activities. Therefore lay participation is sought in each functional activity, in addition to the special fellowship groupings and activities that general departments may provide. *A strong council of churches is representative of the total life of its member congregations and communions*, which means the participation of laymen, laywomen, young people, and clergymen in all program operations.

## **6. Organizational Patterns**

As previously pointed out, there is no standard form of organization for a council of churches. Community organization should be based on specific needs, and needs vary from community to community. Nevertheless, there are so many similarities of need from community to community that basic patterns grow up and resemble each other. In broad outline, a form of council structure based on the needs of a given state or locality will be found to have relevance for meeting the needs in many other situations.

Since the creation of the National Council of Churches, with the merging of the interests of thirteen different agencies, scores of state and local councils of churches have been studying and revising their constitutions. Sample constitutions have been prepared for state councils of churches, for councils of churches in large cities, and for councils of churches in small cities and localities, which, in general, incorporate the principles, nomenclature, and unit structures used by the National Council. This has been done not with any thought of standardization or superimposition of structure; rather, the voluntary modification in the organizational patterns of state and local councils of churches has seemed to imply that there may be great value in achieving a similarity of unit structures throughout the council movement. If this could come about without artificiality, it would make for better understanding throughout the life of the churches, would improve the public relations impact, and would be better adapted to the "habit pattern of our mobile population" now prevalent across America. It has seemed to the writer desirable, therefore, to

outline co-operative structures for interdenominational work at various levels which utilizes the general terminology to describe the forms of unit organization. Each council must decide whether the adoption of such patterns would be desirable in its situation.

## **7. Terms used to describe units in Council Structure**

a. *Assembly* is the term selected to designate the governing body of a council of churches. The assembly consists of the voting representatives appointed by the member communions (in state councils) or congregations (in city, county, and local councils). This is the final legislative and judicial body of a council of churches, and is normally the only unit in the organization with power to modify the constitution or to legislate concerning matters of membership.

The use of the term "assembly" to describe a meeting of the council of churches in a given locality explains more concisely what aspect of the life of a given council was in session. The wider use of the term "assembly" would strengthen public relations, and would convey a sense of the dignity and representative character of the particular council of churches. It seems wise for the present to retain the words "General Assembly" for use by the National and World Councils of Churches, and to designate the governing body of councils of churches in states, cities, and local communities as simply the Assembly of the -----  
Council of Churches. (Name of state or locality)

b. *Board of Directors* is the term selected to designate the unit within the council of churches structure that carries the full powers of the council ad interim, except the power to determine the membership of the council and the power to revise the constitution. "Executive Committee" is the term now in use by many councils to describe this unit in its structure; but, as one contemplates the representative character of this body, its power of directing the policy and program functions and business and financial matters of the council, preference has seemed to favor "Board of Directors." In the National Council the term used is the General Board.

c. *Membership*. It may be useful to pause in our unit descriptions and definitions to consider a very important matter related

to the use of the word "membership." The community relevance of Christian unity can be clarified by more precisely limiting the use of the word "membership" than now current. We have been rather loose and at times inconsistent in describing what is meant by "council membership."

Membership should be limited in its application to the churches. The churches, in the various expressions of their geographical and judicatorial life, are the members of councils of churches. The persons designated by the churches are their voting representatives. Responsibility thus becomes representative and delegated. Communions in their national capacity constitute the membership of the National Council; communions in their state or area judicatorial capacity constitute the membership of state Councils, congregations constitute the membership of city, county, and local Councils.

Other relationships may be referred to by such terms as "consultative," "co-operating," or "advisory" bodies (not members usually and I think preferably), without the right to vote.

Such a tidying up of our usage of the term "membership" will not be easy in the light of certain elements of the history of councils of churches and of current usage. But it would make for fuller participation by certain Christian communions; would stress the representative character of the council; and would tend to eliminate persons functioning as voting representatives in a personal and private capacity.

Though the current trend is distinctly against it, some may wish to emphasize the values inherent in the provision for the presence of selected individuals, appointed by the assembly or the board of directors because of their special or technical competence, their representative character as Christian citizens, and their general influence. Walter Scott Athearn's "Malden Plan," sometimes referred to as the "Christian Citizenship Plan," was the historic plan that stressed the above values. In general, however, provisions for such individuals of special competence can generally be made by foresight and advance consultation with communion and/or congregational appointing bodies, and at the same time safeguard the representative character of the council.

The appointment of voting representatives of local, county, and city councils of churches to the assembly of a state council, or the appointment of voting representatives of state councils of

churches to the General Assembly and the General Board of the National Council of Churches, is quite a different matter. I shall discuss this issue when we consider "Relationships." May I stress a point in this connection, however, by suggesting that as long as local, city, and state councils of churches are representatively and evangelically constituted, provision for said councils to name representatives to the appropriate council of churches in the larger geographical area does not abridge or defeat the churchly character of the representative agency thus constituted. Rather, this practice is useful in enhancing the community relevance of Christian unity.

d. *Division* is the term selected to indicate the major program classification of the churches' co-operative work. The three divisions of Christian education, Christian life and work, and Christian missions (both home and foreign) seem to be acquiring wider usage in current practice. The *Division of Christian Education* (often locally called a Department of Christian Education) is now a part of nearly every council of churches. The Christian education of children, of young people, and of adults, leadership education, Christian family life, audio-visual education, and the special educational ministries through the Sunday, vacation, and weekday sessions of church schools, describe the normal program functions of this division, although additional provisions are made in some councils for camping, for the use and understanding of the Bible, and for educational evangelism.

*The Division of Christian Life and Work* is a unit term generally commensurate in state and local council usage with what it is in the life of the National Council of Churches. Its usage here should not be confused with what the phrase "Life and Work" means in World Council usage. (There it is used in contrast with Faith and Order). Life and work, as it refers to structure within the American conciliar organizations, refers to the following program areas: evangelism, worship and the arts, ministry in institutions, stewardship and benevolence, Christian social relations (frequently described by local councils of churches as "community relations" or social action), including economic life, legislative action, religious liberty, temperance, racial and cultural relations, world affairs, social welfare, and pastoral care.

*The Division of Christian Missions* is a unit term that connotes the world outreach of the church through its missionary efforts

at home and abroad. The program areas with which the Division is concerned include: ministry to migrants, the planning and adjustment of local church relations (comity), the church in town and country, the urban church, missionary education, friendly relations among foreign students, church world service, with such subunits as *CROP*, *Share Our Surplus*, material aid, and resettlement of displaced persons.

Because of the fact that the churches have in the past tended to utilize denominational channels in developing the churches' world outreach, and because the Divisions in the National Council have tended to cultivate denominational rather than state and local interdenominational action, these areas of co-operation are less firmly established within state and local council practice. Here again, we shall consider these issues in the final chapter concerning relationships.

e. *General Department* is the term selected to designate groups of persons who wish to co-operate in the interpretation, development, and expression of the special concerns, interests, and needs of church men, church women, Christian youth, and the Christian ministry. Experience will indicate whether this term is useful to describe the multiple functions now being performed in communities across America by ministerial associations, Christian youth councils, United Church Women, and United Church Men. These co-operative organizations are at times fully autonomous; again in certain communities they are completely integrated aspects of the co-operative work of the churches. The sample constitutions now provided by the National Council set forth certain organizational provisions that, when realizable, may provide for the fuller integration of this aspect of Christian co-operation into the co-ordinated program that the constituent churches desire to carry on through co-operative effort.

f. *Central Department* is a term selected to describe two groups of functions that are related to all the aspects of the organization's life in these particular fields, namely, public relations and business and finance.

*The Central Department of Public Relations* deals with the churches' co-operative efforts to present the Christian Gospel and the good news it bears through such media as the press, the radio, television, and films. In its effort to create a better public understanding of the churches' co-operative work, this department will

utilize newspapers, radio, television, films, audio-visual aids, printed materials, exhibits, and selective advertising, in such a way as to advance every phase of the churches' co-operative program.

*The Central Department of Business and Finance* has responsibility under the supervision of the assembly and the board of directors for the business and financial operations of the council. Through it the co-operating churches will seek: to establish policies and procedures for securing gifts and appropriations essential to the long-term well-being and support of the current budget of the council; to cultivate support from communions, congregations, corporations, foundations, and individuals; to prepare an annual budget; to supervise budget operations; to provide for treasury, business, and pension services, and for the annual audit by a certified public accountant of the financial records of the council.

*Other Unit Structures.* Additional structural provisions will be covered in the constitution, and may provide for: program departments or program committees within divisions and general departments; an executive committee within the board of directors; a nominating committee; and such other committees as the work of the co-operating bodies may require.

## **8. General Organizational Chart**

Organizational charts are designed to show the inter-relatedness of the various parts. The charts (presented in the Appendix), are designed to emphasize the fact that a council of churches is an *organism*, created by the member churches to perform certain specific functions. Each unit within the structure is a component part of the organism as a whole. The council itself has a structure, which the chart seeks to convey, which is the representative agency of its member church bodies, and as such is an organic part of the wholeness of the churches. There are no unrelated parts. There are no hierarchial levels in this structure through which the purposes and objectives set by the churches may be realized.

The charts for various types of council of churches are given:

Chart I—For a city council of churches (see Appendix II, page 111).

Chart II—For a council of churches in a small community (see Appendix III, page 112).

Chart III—For a state council of churches (see Appendix IV, page 113).

### *Similarity in Structure*

The philosophy of a council of churches is common throughout these structures. The nomenclature seeks to convey similarity in meaning at the various geographical levels. Common patterns are used, in so far as possible, nationally, in states and in local communities. When we consider population mobility, leadership tenure, and public relations, if the weaknesses inherent in standardization can be avoided it is believed that the similarity in structure required to meet similar needs should be striven for throughout the various geographical areas of the churches' co-operative life.

The appraisal and evaluation of council structure is a permanent and continuing task. As we weigh these ideas and determine their relevance to the situation in which each of us serves, we may help in framing more suitable structures through which to express Christian unity in the community.

# CHRISTIAN UNITY, Its Relevance to the Community: FOR STAFF

Co-operative Christian unity, which representatives of the churches experience as they work together through councils of churches, leads to a sense of wholeness—a consciousness of belonging to one body. This unity of the Christian fellowship needs to be experienced in the life of the churches before it can be adequately defined or explained. Christ is one. Those who follow Him in working together are enabled to feel their unity and sense the fact that they share in a life derived from Him. The churches are finding that by helping one another in all aspects of their common task they are led into fuller spiritual fellowship with each other. This co-operative Christian unity becomes a living testimony to their oneness in Christ.

As this type of experience grows, the feeling of Christian community in its psychological sense begins to pervade the geographical community. One of the primary contributions the ecumenical movement has made to date is the ever-widening spirit of “community” within the Christian fellowship. Has this fact any relevance for the staff of the churches? What do we mean by the staff of the churches? For our purposes, may we consider the term “staff” to include all those men and women who are employed by the churches to perform their executive and administrative services? In broad outline, this term is meant to include those who are employed interdenominationally and denominationally. There are appropriate staff distinctions within communions and among communions; similarly there are necessary staff distinctions interdenominationally, such as the staff of the National Council of Churches, the state council, and the local council; then for administrative purposes there are functional differentiations in staff duties within particular councils and communions. In essence, however, all such distinctions are secondary. The essential fact is that every man and woman who is called to a position



by one or more of the communions or councils is a member of the one staff of the Church of Jesus Christ. This fact has profound relevance for the Christian community.

Will you join with me in examining some of the possible implications of this staff concept for our work? If the churches are one in their faith in Jesus Christ their Divine Lord and Saviour, and have a staff whose members, with all their job variations and classifications, are nevertheless a part of the whole church's administrative and executive personnel, they ought to act like it. This will not be easy. The "cross" that results from the churches' divided character—yes, when we come closer to the experience of most of us here—the "cross" resulting from *our* long interdenominationally divided character must be borne while we grow together in Christ. But the great new fact of the churches' life today is that all of us, and tens of thousands of our denominationally employed colleagues, share this burden. It is our privilege to help lighten this load for those who may come after us.

The interdenominationally employed part of the staff we shall call the "conciliar staff." The denominationally employed part of the staff we shall designate as the "co-operating staff." It is immediately apparent that these categories are at present not universally appropriate; not, I think, because of their logic, but because of the degree of readiness of parts of the churches' life to accept the implications of what "oneness in Christ" signifies. But the staff sharing what the conciliar movement represents, the more and more frequent interchange from denominational to interdenominational and from interdenominational to denominational employment, and the validating of ministerial status and extension of pension and retirement provisions by denominations for interdenominational service, are encouraging signs of the recognition of staff mutuality and professional Christian kinship within the one body of Christ.

### **1. The Conciliar Staff, Interdenominationally Employed—**

The conciliar staff includes every man and woman, both executive and nonexecutive, as well as ordained and nonordained, who is employed in interdenominational work. Differentiation in function is necessary. Job classification is a helpful, and as the size of the organization increases, a useful organizational pro-

cedure, provided it is not allowed to sour the relationships of any staff member as a part of the whole. Every person in the movement, as a Christian, contributes vocationally to the churches' work. Before God there can be no distinction of rank or class or position. Each person has his ministry. This obtains at every geographical level. Should it not come to pervade the outlook of every member of our conciliar staff, from the humble file clerk to the general secretary, and all in between?

The conciliar staff consists of all persons now employed by the local councils of churches, the state councils of churches, the National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches. They are the persons entrusted with the co-operative program of the churches in so far as professional leadership is concerned.

We do not know how many persons this staff includes. We have a fairly accurate picture of the executive staff. We do not have accurate information as to how many persons, or who they are, now employed in the office secretarial categories of state and local councils of churches. Our records show that there are 486 executive personnel employed by the 220 local councils of churches, 144 executive personnel employed by the 40 state councils of churches, 182 executive personnel employed by the National Council of Churches, 5 executive personnel employed by the American Office of the World Council of Churches, 4 executive personnel employed by the International Missionary Council, and 6 by the World Council of Christian Education.

The nonexecutive staff employed by the National Council of Churches totals 491 persons; there are 27 persons employed on the nonexecutive staff of the three world agencies; a grand total of 518.

The total executive and nonexecutive staff of the National Council of Churches is 673.

In order to complete this tabulation of the churches' conciliar staff, we shall need to compile the totals for the nonexecutive staffs of state and local councils of churches. The total staff reported at all levels is, however, 827 executive and 518 nonexecutive personnel on the local, state, national, and world levels. This is a grand total of 1345 persons.

#### *a. The Local Council Staff Situation*

As indicated above, 486 persons are now employed as executives by the local councils of churches. They represent 156 dif-

ferent titles for executive positions. But in 120 cases the particular title is used only once. Those titles occurring ten or more times are:

Executive Secretary -----	113	Director -----	13
Teacher, Week Day		Secretary -----	12
Religious Education ---	73	Hospital Chaplain -----	10
Executive Director -----	23		
Director, Department			
of Christian Education	21		

These positions are types of professional specialization. Many differ in terminology rather than in type of service. (The detail of this analysis is set forth in Appendix V, page 114.)

Persons now filling these staff positions have been recruited from many sources, such as the pastoral ministry, denominational offices, public education, directors of Christian education, the seminaries, colleges, and universities, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the business world. While there are more clergymen than laymen in the employed executive staff, there is a sizable number of lay executives whose Christian vocation it is to help the churches in their co-operative witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The executive personnel includes 213 women, some as chief executives and some in departmental capacities.

#### b. *The State Council Staff Situation*

There are 144 persons now employed as executives by 40 state councils of churches. In seven of these states the chief executive also serves as the chief executive of the city in which the office of the state council of churches is located. In this way staff integration and specialization have been enhanced, and the service to the community and to the local congregations has been strengthened. There are listed 54 different titles to designate 144 executive positions in 40 state councils of churches. But in 66 cases the particular title is used only once. The titles used with greatest frequency are:

Executive Secretary -----	25
General Secretary -----	8
Associate General Secretary -----	7

(The detailed tabulation of state council staff titles will be found in Appendix VI, page 116.)

These positions are generally similar to those classified for

local councils of churches, but the correlation of state and local staff titles has not been attempted. Personnel has been recruited from the same sources as those for city and local councils, and there are more clergymen than laymen.

Three and one-half states are directed by church women as chief executives, namely: Florida, Maine, Oklahoma, and Washington-Northern Idaho. (The one half needs explaining. In Oklahoma, the executive of the Oklahoma City Council of Churches assists in the executive work of the Oklahoma State Council of Churches. Only a part of Idaho is related to the work of the Washington Council of Churches.)

### *c. The National Council Staff Situation*

There are 182 persons now employed on the executive staff and 491 employed on the nonexecutive staff of the National Council of Churches. The National staff is distributed as follows:

	Number of Executive Persons	Number of Nonexecutive Persons	Total
General Administration -----	14	20	34
Division of Christian Education ----	39	104	143
Division of Christian Life and Work	20	25	45
Division of Home Missions -----	23	33	56
Division of Foreign Missions -----	24	35	59
General Department of United Church Men -----	1	2	3
General Department of United Church Women -----	10	14	24
Broadcasting and Films -----	12	40	52
Church World Service -----	7	68	75
Ecumenical Relations -----	1	2	3
Office for Councils of Churches and Southern Office -----	3	3	6
Public Relations -----	6	6	12
Research and Survey -----	8	9	17
Central Office Services, including Business Office -----	2	49	51
Central Records -----	0	4	4
Finance -----	6	17	23
Organization and Management -----	2	1	3
Personnel -----	2	3	5
Publication and Distribution -----	3	26	29
Treasury -----	2	30	32
	<hr/> 182	<hr/> 491	<hr/> 673

As may be seen at a glance, the range of titles is greater in state and local councils, and the degree of specialization is greater in the National Council staff. This range in titles should probably be narrowed for the sake of effective communication. There are laymen, laywomen, and clergymen in the personnel of the executive staff of the National Council, but the number of ordained persons exceeds the number of lay persons. Should the Association of Council Secretaries initiate such an attempt at the classification of titles and a job description of them?

#### *d. The World Councils*

There are 16 persons employed by the World Council of Churches, 5 of whom are executives; 11 employed by the International Missionary Council, 4 of whom are executives; 15 employed by the World Council of Christian Education, 6 of whom are executives. (The New York offices only of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council).

### **2. Recruiting of Executive Personnel**

The National Council of Churches assists state and local councils in their search for capable executive personnel for the filling of staff vacancies. This service is a function of Field Operations within General Administration, assisted by the Office for Councils of Churches. The service includes: The maintenance of personal record files of persons interested in interdenominational service; personal interviews with prospective staff members; correspondence, with references and consultation with personnel committees of state and local councils of churches.

Though these services are utilized by many state and local councils, it has many inadequacies that need correction. I will defer their consideration for the time being and return to them later. It is evident to us all, I believe, that the growth in the conciliar staff of the churches requires greater attention to recruiting, preparation and training, orientation and counseling with regard to program and administrative practices than has as yet been established.

### **3. The Co-operative Staff**

The phrase "co-operative staff" suggests a group of persons engaged in collective action for mutual benefit. I am using it to

suggest a relevance that Christian unity has for all those men and women who are employed by the denominations in councils of churches. The co-operative staff is a voluntary relationship accepted by denominationally employed executives, whose employing bodies are prepared to carry forward phases of their work co-operatively through councils of churches. Their salaries are provided by the denomination employing them; their functions are co-operatively assigned and denominationally accepted; their services are in behalf of the total Kingdom enterprise as co-operatively authorized and accepted by the council and its constituent member bodies. In a sense the co-operative staff is a type of lend-lease of professional personnel to get a common job done without thought of any return other than the mutual benefit derived from the service rendered.

There have been many examples of co-operative staff work in the past. May I cite a few illustrations:

- a. Denominationally employed research executives, who as a part of a technical staff in co-operative field research conduct assigned studies on an interdenominational basis. The results of these co-operative studies across the past decade have helped guide the planning and adjustment activities of the churches in many states.
- b. Denominationally employed Christian education executives who serve as the age group or functional executives for departments of work in Christian education within given state councils of churches. This has had remarkable results in certain states, and as we differentiate more clearly between what phases of the churches' program should be denominationally executed and what phases should be primarily interdenominationally administered, the co-operative staff principle may be applied with greater facility and effectiveness.
- c. Summary illustrations. Denominationally employed executives have rendered co-operative staff services in nearly every type of interdenominational work. The more frequent ones not already cited above include: Serving as general executives for a limited period; executives for the council's committees on evangelism, ministry in institutions, public relations, legislative action, social welfare, ministry to migrants, resettlement, and Christian social relations. In local councils of churches, especially those having

only voluntary leadership, this principle of the co-operative staff is practiced by hundreds of pastors of local churches in which one pastor gives administrative leadership for a certain function and another pastor directs the work of another function.

#### **4. Feasibility of the Co-operative Staff Principle**

The co-operative staff idea has not always succeeded, and because of this fact it is regarded with skepticism and in certain places with downright opposition. The overburdened character of the staff load of some of our denominational colleagues makes the acceptance of additional obligations almost prohibitive. The denominational identification at times makes a co-operative staff person suspect by another denomination. Again, the denominational executive's experience has not prepared him particularly for his specialized interdenominational executive role. But in spite of these limitations—and they are valid ones—they need not be regarded as insurmountable obstacles.

When one studies carefully the administrative staff cost that the denominational and the interdenominational administrative structures now place on the local congregation, its weight behooves us to seek ways to redeploy the churches' staff in ways which may secure larger benefits from the service of the churches' total staff. As the spirit of Christian unity in the community develops, the co-operative staff idea has real promise.

When a co-operative staff plan is activated, the following provisions may help in making it effective:

- (1) The area of functional responsibility should be clearly defined. For example, the functions of the Department of Evangelism to be undertaken by the co-operative staff member, such as the National Christian Teaching Mission or Visitation Evangelism, ought to be specified, and the nature of the executive, promotional, and interpretive functions should be spelled out. The nature of these functions should be understood by the denominational office, the council of churches, and the public.
- (2) The council should clearly commission the co-operative staff member for this service, and this fact should be explained to the constituent churches. This multiple commissioning may help prevent misunderstanding or allay the fears that sometimes arise where the responsible interdenominational assignment is not understood by all the co-operating churches.

- (3) The employing denomination should specifically authorize the co-operating staff member to accept this co-operative assignment as a part of his more-than-denominational duties.
- (4) The performance of the duties assigned has a valid claim for leadership by the co-operative staff member in proportion to the mutuality of the functions assigned: mutuality in that phase of the work is already a part of the denomination's work, and can be best undertaken in co-operation with other member communions.
- (5) The assignment should be geographically feasible and manageable in regard to residence, as well as in harmony with the area of functional responsibility of the co-operative staff member.
- (6) The co-operative staff members should be encouraged to feel that they are a part of the council staff, and although in a different staff category from the employed staff will help strengthen the spirit of unity and fellowship among the participating churches.
- (7) The work accomplished should have dual reporting: First, as a part of the accomplishment of the churches constituent to the council and second, as a part of the extended ministry of the employing denominations.

Where these provisions can be made, the co-operative staff principle can help strengthen the churches' co-operative work. This strength comes in part from the value of the service rendered without the additional cost for employing additional staff members. But a still greater source of strength that flows from such "co-operative staff" practice is psychological and ecumenical climate conditioning. As church members come to think happily and proudly of their denominational employees carrying significant co-operative Christian tasks, the visibility of the fact of Christian unity is enhanced.

## **5. Staff Preparation**

Very few of the conciliar staff members have had specific academic preparation for interdenominational leadership. There has been specialized study in program content and program skills, and this type of specialized preparation is increasing. In fact, the national staff may be thought of as program specialists,



largely because of their preparation and experience in their particular fields. But most of the interdenominational workers have lacked academic preparation in the "art of administration," the theory of consultative management, the history and nature of the ecumenical movement, and the particular procedures of national, state, and local councils of churches. As the movement for Christian unity in the community develops, there is increasing need to give attention to the discovery, recruitment, and preparation of a skillful and consecrated corps of ecumenical leaders who regard ecumenical administration, with its multiple specializations, as a major professional vocational choice.

### *Graduate Study*

Church colleges, theological seminaries, and graduate schools of religion are beginning to recognize and provide for certain types of courses related to these needs. The curricula provisions so far made, however (with perhaps two notable exceptions, one at Boston University and the other at Yale), have largely avoided the practical field. Courses offered generally stress the ecumenical conferences and the faith and order emphasis within the ecumenical movement. Almost no attention has been given to the development of the specialized vocational knowledge, skills, and laboratory facilities required to prepare men and women for staff positions in councils of churches.

These staff positions in councils of churches constitute a specialized phase of the Christian ministry. Adequate preparation of this phase of the ministry should be projected in at least two or more academic centers, surrounded with national, state, and local council of churches affording opportunities for laboratory experience and supervised practice.

The foundations of the specialized vocational preparation needed for council of churches leadership are a liberal arts education and graduation from a standard theological seminary.

The specialized vocational preparation for ecumenical administration envisaged is therefore of a professional graduate character, and should make provision for giving graduate students a comprehensive acquaintance with the nature, content, and professional skills and procedures of the conciliar process. The programs envisaged should include:

## **(1) Specialized Vocational Courses**

### **a. *World Aspects of Ecumenical Christianity***

The nature and function of ecumenical Christianity; its organizational expression in the World Council of Churches, the International Missionary Council, and the World Council of Christian Education; the ecumenical conferences and councils and their contribution to Christian unity.

### **b. *National Aspects of Ecumenical Christianity***

The history, nature, function, and scope of American co-operative Christianity; its organizational expression in the National Council of Churches; a critical analysis of the current function, program, and operation of the National Council, as the co-operative agency of its member communions.

### **c. *State and Local Aspects of Ecumenical Christianity***

The history and development of Protestant-Orthodox co-operation through state and local councils of churches; their program, structure, staff, budgets, administrative procedures, church and community relationships.

### **d. *Foundation Principles in the Philosophy of Councils of Churches***

Their representative and evangelical character; their inter-relationships, communion-wise and community orientation; their sociological sanctions within geographical patterns; their ethical, theological, and moral implications for community practice.

### **e. *Seminar in Ecumenical Administration***

A program of study will be prepared for each individual student. Typical study problems around which such programs may be organized could include: the function of an executive secretary of a council of churches; denominational program co-ordination; church planning and adjustment; community research and survey; community programs of Christian education, Christian life and work, Christian missions, United Church Women, United Church Men, Christian youth; financing councils of churches.

### **f. *Supervision of Councils of Churches***

A program of study prepared to guide students serving as general executives of state or area councils of churches, or in general aspects of national councils of churches.

## **(2) Laboratory and Clinical Experience**

The purpose of this phase of the program of ecumenical training is to acquire a practitioner's skill in this field. There would be three parts to this program:

a. *Visits, conducted tours*, and faculty-student counseling resulting from visits to council and denominational offices, and the observation of program projects of councils of churches.

b. *Apprenticeship Assignments*

These assignments would be made for a specific function or project on the staff of a co-operating council of churches under the guidance of the instructor.

c. *Field Work Assignment*

This post-graduate assignment would consist of one year's appointment to the staff of a council of churches. The supervision of this work would be the responsibility of the general secretary of the particular accredited council, to be made in consultation with the National Council of Churches.

## **(3) The Development of Scholarly Books and Monographs in Ecumenical Administration**

In order to provide the required books and study guides, and to stimulate writing of a high quality, it is proposed that there be awarded an annual \$5,000 prize for manuscripts of merit within the practical field of Ecumenical Administration.

## **(4) General Ecumenical Orientation of Theological Students**

A secondary purpose to be sought in this field is the ecumenical orientation of theological students preparing for the Christian ministry. The faculty in ecumenical administration could offer general survey courses in local, state, national, and world aspects of ecumenical Christianity in which middlers and seniors may enroll. The results of such study would be to enhance pastoral participation in co-operative Christian service within the whole Protestant community.

## **(5) Financial Requirements**

The cost of the program outlined above may be suggested by the following estimates:

a. *Graduate Department in Ecumenical Administration*  
\$25,000 annually to cover the academic requirements for

the professional vocational instruction and laboratory development as a part of the theological program in each institution chosen, leading to M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in ecumenical administration. This would include instruction and administration of the field program.

b. *Scholarship Aid*

25 ecumenical fellowships, to be awarded for each institution selected. Preference should be granted to 15 persons from councils of churches or denominational staffs for in-service training, and 10 graduate students or young ministers desiring to prepare for council staff positions.

The cost of 15 married student scholarships at \$3,600 each would be \$54,000 annually; the cost of 10 single student scholarships at \$2,000 each would be \$20,000; or a grand total for scholarship aid for 25 students of \$74,000 annually.

c. *Literature Development*

The offering of a \$5,000 prize, plus \$2,500 toward the publication in book form of the prize essay in the field of ecumenical administration, would augment helpfully the literature in this field.

The combined cost for the three elements in this proposal is estimated at \$106,000 annually.

The success of such a program of study may be best assured if it is established in major graduate theological centers where it could draw on the concomitant values in the curriculum of such related fields of inquiry as historical, statistical, and laboratory methods of research; public educational administration; sociology; psychology; communication and business administration. These fields of inquiry, coupled with the core elements in the curriculum of theological education, namely: Bible, church history, Christian theology, philosophy, personality, and Christian doctrine, will furnish supplemental and enrichment courses required for the well-rounded preparation of the ecumenical administrator.

The pioneering effort, which Boston University is making in its Summer School of Ecumenical Administration, is encouraging. The interest of several foundations and universities in the program outlined above is also a heartening sign that the present inadequacies in staff preparation for councils of churches is recognized. Until some such program is financed and manned academically, the statesmanlike staff preparation the conciliar movement should have will be lacking.

## 6. Preparing for Democratic Staff Leadership

The co-operative work of the churches must strive for democratic procedures as an executive skill wherever freedom and responsibility combine. Christlikeness in attitude as the conciliar and the co-operative staffs work on the same team is indispensable. Respect for the personality and views of others is a primary requisite in keeping staff processes and administrative processes democratic. Most of us have no particular academic training in this area; we have to learn from experience. I have found Ray Johns' treatment of this aspect of staff responsibility so useful that I wish to summarize certain of his observations. He defines democracy as "that type of human community where the well-being of each participating person is a central and controlling consideration."<sup>1</sup>

Ordway Tead has defined democratic administration as "that over-all direction of an organization which assures that purposes and policies are shared in the making, that methods are understood and agreed to, that individual potentialities are being enhanced, that corporate or group ends are being realized with a minimum of human friction. It implies further a periodic, orderly, co-operative review of total performance, of leadership in action, of effectiveness of method at every point. It brings to pass collaboration as willing, co-ordination as informed and continuing, personality growth as an actual and a continuing promise."<sup>2</sup>

Ray Johns discusses essential bodies of knowledge required for the staff executive role from which I have made the following adaptation. There are four inter-related bodies of knowledge that should be mastered. They are:

- (1) "An understanding of individuals and group relationships."<sup>3</sup> Administration, particularly in councils of churches, deals with human relations, and these human relations are to be measured and directed at all times by the teachings of Jesus.
- (2) "An understanding of community forces and relationships."<sup>3</sup> Council of churches staff executives particu-

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1. Ray Johns, *Executive Responsibility*, Association Press, New York, 1954, p. 35.

2. Ordway Tead, *Creative Management*, New York, Association Press, 1945, pp. 71-72.

3. Ray Johns, *ibid.*, p. 43 (adapted).

larly need to understand their communities. They need to know how to study church and community life. They must grasp the inter-relatedness of community forces; how "prestige structures operate, how changes develop, how changes operate, and how co-operation is achieved."

- (3) "An understanding of church programs and agencies."<sup>4</sup> Staff executives must recognize that denominational and council programs are community instrumentalities intended to render service to people. The needs of people for acquiring an understanding of the Christian Gospel are the primary justification for the council's existence. Its ability to help the constituent churches get on with their work is the crucial test.
- (4) "An understanding of the total administrative process."<sup>4</sup> Staff executives need to master the facts of the administrative process "in setting objectives and establishing policies, in creating and maintaining an organization, in making plans and carrying them out," in evaluating the results, in getting and weighing pertinent facts, in presenting facts clearly and persuasively.

The role of the executive can best be described as a "helping teacher," or, as Trecker has emphasized, it is "essentially an enabling or helping role."

These areas of knowledge are essential professional equipment for the staff of the church. They are supplemental resources to the Christian minister's or church executive's basic professional preparation. For those who are now in service, perhaps an in-service training program would be a supplementary approach to the academic program outlined above. The content of democratic administration skills and knowledge would afford another approach for regional interdenominational staff conferences, such as are now well established in New England, the South, the Central Northwest "pow-wow," and the West Coast.

## **7. Staff Conferences**

Staff conferences are types of in-service training as well as consultative management experiences. They are so well established that one hesitates to make certain observations about them, and yet they are so important a part of the relevance of Christian unity for the staff of the churches that I present these observa-

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4. H. B. Trecker, *Education for Social Work Administration Today*, American Association of Social Workers, New York, 1952, pp. 9-11.

tions under four categories, namely "A.C.S.," regional annual conferences for council staff members, state-wide staff conferences, and interdenominational participation in denominational staff conferences.

a. *The Association of Council Secretaries*

This is an association of individuals, each of whom is professionally employed in the work of a council of churches at the local, state, national, or world level. Membership is a personal matter, though organizations are invited to share in making modest contributions to its budget in order that its annual program may be cared for financially. The fellowship represented in "A.C.S." is of rare quality, and has had a formative influence on the conciliar movement. It has likewise influenced the thinking of denominational executives, seminary deans, council presidents, and research colleagues who have shared from time to time in these annual meetings.

There are some creative tensions to be recognized. For example, national council program plans and concerns must not be allowed to monopolize the program scene. Nor must the concerns that are primarily focused on the problems of state and city colleagues be so dominant as to cause national staff colleagues to decide that the program really isn't for them. What attention should the program give to the concerns of councils of United Church Men and Church Women, which, for the most part, are led by volunteers? Do we need perhaps to give particular attention to the needs of the churches' co-operative agencies that are volunteer-led, such as most of the councils of churches with voluntary leadership and most councils of United Church Men and United Church Women represent? Or should programs from year to year give particular attention to special emphases, such as has been attempted this year by inviting the presidents of councils of churches to meet with us? Does the Association wish to wrestle with some of the specialized problems peculiar to those who work in councils of churches in order to give greater professional guidance in certain problem areas? Possibilities might be:

- (1) Job description and classification of functions of councils of churches' executives.
- (2) Staff titles. There is considerable unhappiness over the name "executive secretary."

- ( 3 ) Pension and retirement plans.
- ( 4 ) Housing and travel provisions.
- ( 5 ) Contracts and their relation to tenure.
- ( 6 ) Salary scales.
- ( 7 ) Personal counseling procedures bearing on recruiting, placement, and transfer.
- ( 8 ) Biographical records—should there be a central depository?
- ( 9 ) What type of research studies is needed?
- (10) Installation services.
- (11) Staff orientation.
- (12) Professional standards for the council movement.

Some of these questions you may wish to consider in parallel sessions, and bring suggestions thereon to the executive committee. They are illustrative of problems and needs that are met by members at various geographical levels. The most important part of the conciliar movement is its "manpower talent." To me the crux of the situation, as Edward R. Stettinius observed in another connection, is not as much the need to find council staff leaders, as it is our failure to introduce an orderly and methodical system for the discovery, preparation, placement, and in-service training of council staff personnel. This Association, in co-operation with the councils of churches, through their staff members at all levels, has a prime responsibility to contribute to the solution of these problems. Shouldn't A.C.S. become more of a local, state, and national program and field operations planning experience in which the unity of interest and responsibility of the conciliar staff is given meaning, purpose, and reality?

#### *b. Regional Annual Conferences*

The council of churches distribution, the varying needs with which they are confronted, and the requirements of travel, all favor regional staff conferences. They are proving exceedingly rewarding. Those now established are rendering a helpful service; others are probably needed. Local, state, and national staffs should jointly seek to make their programs meaningful to the councils within the region. They should also become an important influence in helping the National Council staff improve its service to the churches and councils within each region.

#### *c. State-wide Staff Conferences*

Such staff conferences help weld the conciliar staff of a state into a harmonious whole, and in many states are proving to be



an indispensable asset. The addition from time to time of the members of the "co-operative staff," denominationally employed, has likewise proved an effective staff-planning and strategy experience for the total Protestant-Orthodox program exploration. Here, too, members of the National Council staff belong as partners in a co-operative enterprise.

#### *d. Interdenominational Participation in Denominational Staff Conferences*

This approach seeks to enlist in the staff meetings of the denominations some of those of the churches' staff who are interdenominationally employed. They must be invited to share, not as outsiders, but as staff colleagues at work on certain phases of the particular denomination's work that it carries forward co-operatively with other communions in a local, state, or national council of churches. A considerable number of examples of this could be cited. The results have been marked on the state level, making for greater comradeship, more inclusive thinking and planning, and a broadened understanding of the co-operative enterprise and the denominational enterprise. The benefits are mutual. They are a logical expression of the growing desire to work together and improve acquaintance, confidence, and trust—the true ingredients of Christian unity in the community.

### **8. The Nonexecutive Staff**

In this discussion of the staffs of the churches and the problems related to their services in behalf of co-operative Christian unity, scant attention has been given to the important contribution of the nonexecutive staff. Reference was made to the absence of any qualitative distinctions to be made between the contributions which executive and nonexecutive staff members render. All executives know how heavily they rely on their non-executive assistants, whose loyal and devoted and consecrated commitment to Christian vocation is beyond words. Worker satisfaction is so important a part of this process that it must not be overlooked.

The fundamentals of staff relationships, which I wish to apply especially to the nonexecutive-executive staff relations, as outlined by Ray Johns in *Executive Responsibility*, list nine concepts deserving particular consideration:

- (1) "A respect for acceptance of persons is fundamental." A person is always an end and never merely a means. Respect for others is encouraged by the way the executive deals with everyone in the organization.
- (2) "A sense of mutuality and confidence is necessary." Confidence must be demonstrated in day-to-day relationships.
- (3) "An atmosphere conducive to self-expression and relaxed relationships is essential."
- (4) "Freedom from fear, insecurity, and frustration underlies co-operative democratic relationships."
- (5) "Equity in work loads and responsibilities and in use of facilities is also necessary."
- (6) "Use of the group process in planning and decision-making is one of the major ways by which democratic relationships are established."
- (7) "A sense of discipline and a sense of mutual responsibility and accountability must at the same time be developed."
- (8) "A sense of wholeness and responsibility for the total enterprise is inherent."
- (9) "A sense of personal and group achievement in realizing personal goals and organizational purposes is also fundamental."<sup>5</sup>

These concepts are valid in all staff relationships, but are particularly relevant to the staff relationships that should be established between an executive and his nonexecutive comrades on the council staff.

Comradeship, then, in being co-workers with God is the key to effective staff relations in the cause of making Christian unity real. This comradeship applies at all geographical levels. It likewise includes denominational and interdenominationally employed staff members; they all belong to the staffs of the churches, who together are by their life and work helping to make Christian unity real in the community.

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5. Ray Johns, *Executive Responsibility*, New York, Association Press, 1954, pp. 91-92.

# CHRISTIAN UNITY, Its Relevance to the Community: FOR FINANCE

## 1. Finance

The financial relevance of Christian unity to the community is manifold. The divided character of Protestantism adds immeasurably to the cost of the churches' work in the community—cost in buildings, maintenance, leadership, and Christian fellowship. With all the wealth of the American people and their churches, it is doubtful if they can provide the type of religious agencies that our expanding population requires without greater implementation of Christian unity in the community. Without greater unity, the waste in money and leadership talent may prove a nemesis of the churches.

The advantages in a co-operative approach to the financial undergirding of the churches' work are a revelation. Co-operative preparation of leadership and materials; a simultaneous nurturing of church members in Christian stewardship; the public relations and evangelistic impact of "Religion in American Life" and "One Great Hour of Sharing"; the power and vitality of stewardship and benevolence institutes; and the phenomenal successes in community after community of the United Church Canvass are examples of the relevance of Christian unity for finance.

These emphases are relatively recent in co-operative church activity, the United Canvass having begun in 1942.

One wonders if there is any correlation between this increased co-operation of the churches in the field of stewardship education with its co-operative financial cultivation on the one hand, and the upward curve in church giving on the other. We who believe so have faith that as Christian unity grows and is appropriately related to co-operative financial efforts in communities, the giving spiral of American churches will continue to rise accordingly.

But these considerations, though exceedingly important, are

not the primary focus for our attention. The fact of their presence gives both background and foundation for exploring the relevance of Christian unity to financing the co-operative work of the churches. A council of churches, as the creature of its constituent bodies, is organized and controlled by them; they determine its policy, and are responsible for seeing that what it does is willed by and subject to the member churches' over-ruling direction and approval. The council really belongs to the member churches. As a certain judicatory has officially declared: "These councils of churches belong to us just as completely as do our church boards and our church institutions. We ought, therefore, to support the cost of their work as a part of our own activity."

This sense of mutuality, which co-operative Christian unity produces, is the basis for projecting a long-range policy for financing councils of churches. Happily there are encouraging facts about council financing. The proportion of denominational support for co-operative work is steadily upward. On the national scene the budget picture of the National Council shows that in

1951, the denominations, churches, and related agencies gave \$2,012,746, which was 42.0% of the total income of \$4,787,337; in

1952, the denominations, churches, and related agencies gave \$3,378,124, which was 49.8% of the total income of \$6,791,549; in

1953, the denominations, churches, and related agencies gave \$4,651,801, which was 58.5% of the total income of \$7,955,199; in

1954, the denominations, churches, and related agencies gave \$5,037,964, which was 57.5% of the total income of \$8,692,725.

The summary of giving to local and state councils of churches, as compiled by W. P. Buckwalter, indicates that in

1952, the churches gave \$1,384,063, which was 23.8% of the total income of \$6,101,832; in

1953, the churches gave \$1,806,229, which was 26.5% of the total income of \$7,161,292; in

1954, the churches gave \$2,101,407, which was 28.9% of the total income of \$7,857,534; in

1955, the churches gave \$2,598,888, which was 27.4% of the total income of \$9,479,700.

The advancing American economy and the more favorable Federal income tax policy of allowing 30% deductions in giving for certain religious benevolence purposes, have no doubt an influence upon these facts. But two additional trends are influencing the action of denominations, local churches, and church agencies, in this area of finance. First, the rapid transformation of councils of churches from aggregations of individuals into representatively responsible agents of the constituting church bodies; second, the advancing sense of the togetherness of the churches in Jesus Christ.

a. *Principle of Financial Integrity*

The representative unity resulting from these trends provides the framework within which can be projected a philosophy of financing the churches' co-operative work. It may be termed the principle of financial integrity. The financial integrity of the member church bodies of a council of churches is measured partly by the degree to which they pay their share of the cost of their co-operative work. Since a council is the joint possession of its member church bodies, and a projection of their ministry, they share mutually in the cost of their co-operative work. The proportionate share of this cost can be computed in several ways. Certain councils use the "cents per member" basis; others compute the cost on a "percentage of the budget" basis. Experience favors the latter. The procedure for working out the "proportionate share" based on budget has two steps:

- (1) Divide the budget of the council of churches by the sum of the current expense and benevolence income of the member bodies.
- (2) Multiply the current expense and benevolence budget of each member church body by the percentage obtained in (1) above.

The resulting percentage in (1), when applied to the actual budget of each member church body, will show the share of the cost each partner congregation or communion needs to contribute in order to pay for the co-operative work it conducts through its council of churches. The financial stability and integrity of the churches' co-operative work depends heavily in the long run on the extent to which this principle becomes established in practice.

The member churches of the National Council have before them the policy action of the General Board requesting com-

munions to "encourage the acceptance by congregations and denominations of their obligation to provide their share of the cost of their co-operative work at the local, state, national, and world levels." Certain communions have taken encouraging actions supporting this policy, a recent one being the Presbytery of Brooklyn, N. Y.; and the policy is reflected in giving by member communions in certain states. One state reports: "The denominations have now come through. In 1946, approximately \$8,000 was received annually from this [denominational] source. For 1955, we have a solid commitment for nearly \$33,000; and for 1956 we have good reason to expect an additional \$11,000, making the total expectation from denominations for 1956, \$44,000." From a contribution of \$8,000 to \$44,000 in ten years represents steady, substantial gain in denominational support.

*b. Procedures in Formulating the "Proportionate Share" Principle of Askings*

What shall be the basic budget figure for the council of churches, to be selected in determining the "proportionate share" formula? What items shall go into this "core budget"? This must be decided in each situation, and the decision will be influenced by the various dependable sources of income, as church budget support, individual contributions, income from services rendered, gifts from business firms, corporations, and foundations. Experience shows that even though the income for co-operative work comes from these four basic sources, it is still an advantage to prepare the actual "proportionate share" formula, so that the member church bodies may know what is their share of the cost of their co-operative work. Generally, responsible institutions and persons do not relish some one else's paying for what really belongs to them. This logic has value, and should not be overlooked.

But it may be the part of wisdom to limit the budget base for determining the "proportionate share" formula to the central administrative costs of the council organization. These costs include such items as: Rent, utilities, postage, equipment, administrative salaries, accounting, treasury and business operations, telephone, travel, printing, and public relations. Usually it is wise to include also certain of the well-established program serv-

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6. Jesse D. Reber, *Pennsylvania Council of Churches—Policy for Financing*, Harrisburg, February, 1955.

ices. These items may represent 40% or 55% or 70%, more or less. When this has been decided and the basic budget figure determined, the proportionate percentage formula can then be fixed as the actual basis of askings. There is considerable support for this procedure, particularly as a way to progress toward the establishment of a long-range policy of "proportionate share" budget financing. A number of newly organized councils have been founded on the provision, by member churches from their budgets, of these total central administrative costs.

Some continue to feel that the setting up of a flat percentage as "a fair share formula" of support contains two very real dangers. The first danger, they feel, overlooks the fact that the same percentage constitutes a larger gift from a small total than it does from a large total. The second danger, they feel, is acute in local councils even though it may not greatly affect state councils. That is the factor of distance. "Fringe churches" which, because of their distance from the center of operations, cannot participate in what is being done together, either as much as other churches nearer by or as much as they themselves might wish, cannot be expected to support co-operative Christianity at the *same rate* as those at the center of things. A sliding scale of support, which takes account of distance, will, they feel, avoid this danger.

When the "proportionate share" principle of askings is based on central administrative costs, the council must then rely on the interest within the community to support special programs and causes that have a greater or more varied human appeal. Communication is obviously one of the strongest factors in the support of special program costs, as well as the central administrative costs. When the members of the churches do not know what councils of churches do, how can they be expected to finance such work? We are all familiar with this problem; and I do not mean nor am I competent to discuss the principles of fund-raising that are most applicable in this connection. But, as we consider plans for providing the councils' central administrative costs, the "United Church Canvass" suggests a helpful approach.

### c. *The United Church Canvass*

The United Church Canvass is a program of conducting simultaneously the finance campaigns of a number of the congregations in a given community. With the public relations assistance from

the National Advertising Council which provides "complete coverage" in R.I.A.L; the improved fund-raising techniques that careful and united preparation and training of the canvassers help provide; and the skilled direction that united effort can usually make available, the results have been most rewarding.

Councils of churches have greatly aided and usually sponsored the United Church Canvass. In fact, the churches must *have* a common agency or else *create* one before they *can* function on this project. Couldn't the "proportionate share" plan for financing the work of the council of churches and the United Church Canvass plan for financing the churches be helpfully combined? This could be one of the ways in which the relevance of Christian unity to community action becomes operative in the churches' financial procedures.

In order to become effective, the "proportionate share" percentage should be determined by the member church bodies, ahead of their finance campaigns. This percentage would then be applied to each local congregation's budget for the ensuing year and included in it. The United Church Canvass literature could then interpret the council's program as a part of each local church's work, and the values of Christian unity in the community, which the United Church Canvass exemplifies, would in turn help undergird financially the co-operative program of the churches for the ensuing year.

#### d. *Stewardship Institutes*

More basic educationally than the United Church Canvass technique, but fully in harmony with it, is an adequate interpretation of Christian stewardship. The long-range strategy for financing the churches' work depends on a deeper understanding and the fuller practice of Christian stewardship.

The churches can co-operatively assist each other in developing a practical program of stewardship, giving guidance concerning the meaning of Christian stewardship, as well as teaching and sharing successful methods for conducting the every member canvass. A stewardship institute program, which has proved valuable for certain communities, may consider these topics: the philosophy of Christian stewardship, including its Biblical basis; Christian trusteeship; the essentials of a good every member canvass; building a budget; the visit in the home; and efficient record keeping.



Such stewardship institute programs help provide foundations for the local churches' personnel and total financial needs. An important by-product of such stewardship institutes is that the local council of churches' financial and service program benefits indirectly by virtue of helping to strengthen the commitment to the local church's financial program.

e. *"Proportionate Share" applied to Inter-Council Financing*

There is another area of relevance that co-operative Christian unity bears to finance. This has to do with the financial support one council contributes to the support of another council. Local councils generally contribute to the support of state councils; certain local and state councils contribute to the support of the National Council. Various attempts have been made to devise a systematic basis of askings, but with inconclusive results.

A certain state is now experimenting with the formula that all money raised in certain counties shall be divided 60% to the county and 40% to the state council. In another state, one city retained 20% and the state received 80%; in another county in the same state the reverse was true, 80% being retained in the county and 20% going for state council support.

A possible procedure for applying the "proportionate share" formula to the support local councils give to their state council would be: Total the budgets of all the supporting councils of churches within a given state; decide together what part of the state budget is a legitimate asking from local councils; then divide the total of local council budgets into the agreed-upon proportion of the state budget figure. The resulting percentage would provide a uniform basis by which each local council could determine its share to be contributed to the state council of churches.

f. *National Council Support from Local and State Councils*

Could the "proportionate share" formula be applied in helping to indicate a share that local and state councils of churches may wish to contribute to the cost of the work of the National Council? The National Council's Field Operation's budget for 1955 totals approximately \$92,900. The local and state councils' contributions during 1954 totalled \$12,728.29. The total income for state and local councils in 1953 was \$7,161,292. In order to raise \$92,900, each state or local council would need to contribute

1.3% of its income. But the National Council's primary support for Field Operations comes from communions and individuals. Suppose it were agreed that only a fourth of the cost of its Field Operations budget should be sought from local and state council giving. If this were acceptable, then a basis for determining a local or state council's share of the support of the National Council would be .3%. Would such a formula be useful and relevant? The judgment of state and local council colleagues would be helpful to the members of the Advisory Committee to the Office for Councils of Churches as they study policies and procedures for financing the Field Operations portion of the work of the National Council.

# CHRISTIAN UNITY,

## Its Relevance to the Community:

## FOR RELATIONSHIPS

The thesis we have been examining is that the church as the body of Christ is one. As the churches grow together through co-operative effort, they need an agency like a council of churches for implementing their unity. This agency should be an inclusive one, through which all the activities the churches authorize may be executed. The trends in this direction and the nature of the structure required to achieve such inclusiveness have been outlined in Chapter III.

Very little has been said, however, though perhaps something has been implied as "staff" was being considered, concerning the inter-relatedness of the several phases within the conciliar movement. It, too, has been inherent as background when finance was presented, but the question of the inter-related parts of the council movement and the problems posed by the present status of these relationships deserves additional attention.

### a. *One Movement*

Councils of churches, as we understand them, comprise one movement expressing the churches' "will to unity" at the local, state, national, and world levels. They are representative in character, and evangelical in faith and practice. (The participation of nonevangelical congregations at the local level and communion judicatories in certain state councils does not deny this evangelical witness, as the almost unanimous official declarations of these councils testify.) These councils are practical demonstrations of the will of the churches to achieve unity through co-operation. As the historical statement for the *Cleveland Work Book* explained the movement's motivation, "the desperate need of the modern world calls for a new effort to order the churches' forces in the most effective way for the reinforcing of each by the strength of all; for united plans for the strongest possible impact of the agencies on the totality of Christian prob-

lems and concerns, and for such closer relationships as will make these objectives possible.”<sup>1</sup>

### *b. Preliminary Steps*

A review of the steps that brought the National Council into being is suggestive of an approach that the churches have followed. But I shall try to show that this process, as it affects state and local co-operation, is partial and incomplete.

In 1933 the International Council called a conference to consider possible measures for closer co-operation among the several councils. These national councils' mutuality of field operations was a significant cause for calling this conference.

In 1935 a permanent Inter-Council Field Committee was organized, and became in 1939 the Inter-Council Field Department. Its efforts were directed primarily toward the co-ordination of the field programs of the general (national) agencies and toward the development of councils of an inclusive type in states, cities, and local areas.<sup>2</sup> Also in 1939 an Inter-Council Field Staff was formed (national), and likewise an organization of the secretaries of the state and city councils by the merger of the Association of Executive Secretaries and the Employed Council Officers Association. It is the present Association of Council Secretaries, and has as its distinguishing feature from the A.E.S. and the E.C.O.A., the membership provision for national and world council executives.

In 1938 the Presbyterian overture on “fuller unity in Christian service” and the Federal Council's invitation to the general interdenominational agencies to engage in a joint study of inter-council relationships set in motion the chain of events that resulted happily in the organization of the National Council of Churches at Cleveland in 1950.

### *c. Principal Reasons for Seeking Fuller Integration*

The committee on closer relationships set forth the principal reasons for seeking to effect the closest possible relationships as follows:

“As an essential step in creating an integrated co-operative movement for the service of the churches;

“As a practical measure for increased efficiency in operation;

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1. *Work Book*, Cleveland Constituting Convention, Planning Committee, New York, 1950, p. 1.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

"As a recognition of the essential inter-relatedness of the functions and interests of these agencies;

"As a dramatic and convincing demonstration of the churches' desire for united action in this time of crisis."

The committee on closer relationships set forth the principal reasons for seeking to effect the closest possible relationships as follows:

"That the lack of an integrated and co-ordinated strategy of church work is a limiting and weakening factor in many areas of the churches' service influence;

"That existing interdenominational organizations on every level are limited in their effectiveness, first, because they represent only a part of the churches; second, because they represent only a part of the interest of the churches included in their constituency; third, because in different degrees they are all inadequately supported; fourth, because their inter-relations are such that each is not sufficiently reinforced by the strength of all;

"That, in spite of all limitations, the co-operative movement as a whole is a striking demonstration of the growing unity of the church and of the great actual and potential value of united effort."

A key phrase here is particularly apt to point up the present situation, namely, "Their inter-relations are such that each is not sufficiently reinforced by the strength of all." The great actual and potential value of co-operative Christian unity has been strikingly demonstrated by the agencies served by the members of A.C.S. But the present provisions for the two-way participation of the co-operative agencies the churches have established will be conceded by most observers to be less than satisfactory.

#### *d. Relationships: National, State, and Local*

An important responsibility of the National Council is to help the churches extend and strengthen their co-operative agencies. The Council constitution recognizes this by the provision in Article II—"Objects: To foster and encourage co-operation among the churches for the purposes set forth in this constitution," and Article V, "Functions: Fostering the formation and development of effective local agencies of interdenominational co-operation in agreement with the preamble of the constitution."

*Autonomy:* State and local councils of churches are auto-

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3. *Christian Faith in Action*, National Council of Churches, 1951, pp. 26-27. Used by permission.

mous agencies, responsible to their constituent congregations or communions. They are self-governing. Their structural policy might be described as congregational. The National Council has only advisory relations to such councils, and these advisory relations are actually based on common tasks.

*Function:* When we turn from structure to function, however, state and local councils are functionally partners in one co-operative enterprise, consisting of local, city, state, national, and worldwide expressions. The staff and program resources of each are a part of a whole, and the fullest interchange of needs, program plans, and staff services flows back and forth in mutual reinforcement. The *interdependence* of all this work is a major fact undergirding these relationships.

*Representation:* The constitutional basis for National Council-state and local council relationships is still marginal and generally unsatisfactory. Article V, Section 3, covers these relationships. It provides that the co-operative work of the churches in a state shall be entitled to one representative in the General Assembly if the state council is representatively and evangelically constituted. Similarly, the sum total of the co-operative work of the churches in cities and local communities in the U. S. A. may have ten representatives in the General Assembly. In the General Board, the co-operative work of the churches in states and cities shall be represented by one-seventh of the number of persons representing this work in the General Assembly. (All representatives must be approved by their denominations.)

*Units of the Council:* The co-operative work of the churches is related to the various units of the Council as follows:

*The Division of Christian Education* Assembly provides for four representatives from each *member* state council of churches and one additional person for every 150,000 church members in each state beyond the first 150,000 church members.

*The General Department of United Church Women* provides that the 48 state presidents and 50 additional persons representing state and local councils of church women shall be members of its Board of Managers.

*The General Department of United Church Men* provides for 3 representatives from each state council of United Church Men, the parent body of which qualifies for representation on the General Assembly.

*The General Committee on Program and Field Operations* provides for 7 members who are state and city council executives, and 17 additional persons who have been officers of state and local councils of churches.

*The Advisory Committee to the office for Councils of Churches* provides for 21 members experienced in the co-operative work of the churches in state and local councils.

*The Advisory Committee to the Southern Office* provides for 64 persons, all of whom are related to the co-operative work of the churches in this region.

The By-Laws of the following units provide for state and local council representation as follows:

Department of International Affairs -----	5
Department of the Urban Church -----	3
Department of the Town and Country Church -	3
Broadcasting and Films Commission -----	5
Joint Department of American Communities Overseas -----	5
Central Department of Ecumenical Relations ---	3
Joint Department of Evangelism -----	5
General Department of United Church Men ----	2
Joint Department of Stewardship and Benevolence -----	2
Central Department of Church World Service --	3
Division of Foreign Missions -----	2

Each program unit and each program executive sustains vital relationships with the co-operative work the churches carry forward together through state and city councils. The National Council has assigned the central responsibility for directing these relationships to the General Board's Committee on Program and Field Operations.

The General Assembly of the National Council at Boston in 1954 authorized that study be undertaken concerning the representation of the co-operative work of the churches in states and local communities in the General Assembly and the General Board of the National Council.

As this study is undertaken, issues like the following will probably be encountered:

- (1) Is the National Council a council of *churches* or a council of *councils*?
- (2) Do state and local councils desire to be a greater part of the National Council, structurally, than they are at present?
- (3) May churches give valid expression to their convictions, policies, and concerns in more than one way?

Let us examine these issues briefly.

Is the National Council a council of churches? *Certainly*; there is no other basis of membership. Every voting representative must be validated and therefore appointed, by the communion to which he belongs. This is not a popular provision with some of our state and city council colleagues, but has proved to be an acceptable and workable formula for retaining by the member churches complete control of their co-operative work conducted through the National Council.

Do state and local councils of churches desire to be more closely related, structurally, to the National Council, so as to be considered an integral part of the Council? Frankly, some do and some do not. This is a crucial consideration, and must be faced realistically. The full freedom and local autonomy of the various parts of the council movement are regarded by some as permanently desirable. The reasons given bear a strong resemblance to those usually cited by a communion or congregation that wishes to remain aloof from expressions of co-operative Christian unity.

But many are beginning to wonder if disavowal of any relationship with the National Council is not a retarding and short-sighted technique on the part of whomever so asserts. How can there be oneness in purpose and function and still such assertions be valid? The public finds it hard to understand how these distinctions can be defended. Many are coming to see that in order for the strength of each to be reinforced by the strength of all, the inter-relatedness of the churches' co-operative work, at all levels, must be assured. This can be furthered by state and local councils, by their actions and by their policy, to be more avowedly a part of the same enterprise as is the National Council, seeking to correct the weaknesses and benefitting by the strength of the whole. Likewise the National Council needs to vitalize and enhance its relation to the co-operative work of the churches in states and local communities, recognizing that practically every program it undertakes requires the intelligent and sympathetic participation of the churches' representatives in states and local communities.

Unity may be preserved within variety, and the conciliar process is one technique for achieving this, without uniformity.

The member churches in the National Council have at least



three and some four or more areas through which their polities are exercised. These three areas conform roughly to the three main areas of council of churches expression, namely: local, state or regional, and national. The issue differs among communions, however, because of the differences in polity among the churches that are congregationally, presbyterially, and episcopally governed. But since there is a proper churchly authority exercised by the three systems of church government at each of the three main geographical levels, is it not consistent to maintain that it is a valid church judgment that is being expressed, in so far as the area polity permits, at each of the three levels? If so—and it seems so to the writer—then the barrier, which at times arises when enlarged representation for the churches' co-operative work, from local to state, and from local and state to the National Council, does not really exist. Under careful scrutiny, it would appear to be based on a false assumption, namely, that by providing representation of the co-operative work of the churches from the smaller to the larger geographical area, you thereby modify a church agency's representative character. *Not so*; you simply give expression to the principle that churches may express valid judgment *locally* and through *state judicatories*, as well as through their national and international plenary bodies.

It may be useful to remember that the issues are somewhat differently drawn on the world scene. The International Missionary Council and the World Council of Christian Education may represent more of the "individual in a personal and private capacity" principle of participation than does the conciliar process that local, state, and national councils represent in the United States. Whatever factors or prejudices these world relationships may currently typify should not be allowed to retard the closer integration of the conciliar movement in the United States. If the degree of adherence to the "representative" and the "evangelical" principles becomes as substantially universal on the world scene, as it now is in the United States, closer integration among the co-operative agencies of the churches at the world level is well overdue.

The current triennium of the National Council of Churches is a time when the closer relationships of the various council agencies are being studied. The members of the association will be involved in the search for the right road to follow.

Another consideration needs emphasis. It concerns the vital-

ity of the relationships that state and local councils of churches sustain toward one another. In some states these relationships are cordial and mutually reinforcing; in some states the inter-relationships are self-defeating, and a kind of studied indifference is maintained; in still others there are jurisdictional jealousies; and in certain areas of function, open antagonism.

These two latter-named types are a serious handicap, and in a sense thwart the larger purposes striven for by both the state and local councils involved. Christian unity cannot have its rightful community relevance until these relationships are clarified and Christianized. Their existence in turn may influence attitudes of churchmen adversely, as they participate in other geographical phases of the council movement. Still more self-defeating is the way such attitudes prevent the realization of the deeper spiritual association so potential in any enterprise where Christians work together in love.

Christian unity stems from one's realization of the churches' oneness in Christ. As Christians draw closer to Him and try to do their Father's work in the community, they find one another. This psychological discovery is a community of spirit, of love, of mutuality, of brotherhood. This spirit is enkindled representatively as churches work through their representatives, and think and pray and speak and act together in geographical communities, be they local, state, national, or world-wide. They are parts of one common movement, each part rightly constituting a necessary phase of the churches' desire to upbuild the body of Christ in love. This desire may express itself without geographical reference, but only when its relevance to the geographical community is understood does it truly come alive and reach out to embrace the whole inhabited earth.

#### *f. Sovereignty*

The restoration of sovereignty to West Germany by the Pact of Paris was much in the news in the middle of 1955. Americans do not make great use of the word "sovereignty"—perhaps because of the price it has cost! The citizens of the United States are the sovereign power in this democracy. The freedom and liberty under God that this fact connotes is precious beyond life itself. In a sense, I think the "sovereignty" of denominations is similarly treasured. The members of a given communion are so loyal to the particular formulation of faith and the traditional

inheritance with which this faith and practice are framed that they fear any development, sometimes called a super-church, that might abridge their sovereignty.

But when a local congregation or a national communion becomes a member of a council of churches, it is a representative member. The new co-operating relationship does not delegate the right of self-determination to some one else. Through the official representatives, which the congregation or the denomination appoints, the religious body involved chooses to exercise areas of its sovereignty co-operatively or corporately. The churches, through constitutional safeguards which they alone can make, will not find that their interdenominational agencies have abridged their sovereign powers of decision-making. The consciousness of their oneness in Christ will be expressed through co-operative action by their delegates. The purposes, principles, and values for which they stand are shared in their community context, and the strength of each helps strengthen all.

#### *g. Authority and Control*

A council of churches is a council composed of churches at each geographical level. Through it the member churches take counsel together about their work. As a council it has no authority over its member churches. The moral impact of its actions and the value of its program of activities constitute its authority. In this sense its only authority is derivative, resulting from the intrinsic value of the common judgment expressed and the good resulting from the service given. A spiritual basis for this is found in the words of Jesus: "He who would be truly great among you must be the servant of all."

#### *h. Prophetically Loyal*

A council of churches needs to see its task in the light of what the churches ought to be doing together in the community. How shall the co-operating churches lift up Christ in order that all men may be drawn unto Him? To answer this question calls for a prophetic endeavor to put ourselves and our churches under the judgment of Christ, responsive to His calling, His prompting, and His sending. As churches seek co-operatively to do this, they realize that the manifestation of their unity with Christ in the life of the community cannot be fully achieved until "each part is working properly" (Ephesians 4:16)—only then is the body

of Christ truly upbuilded in love. A council of churches does not measure up to its full opportunity until it speaks, through its actions, to the needs of this age.

Josiah Royce, Harvard University's great idealistic philosopher, "supplemented his absolute idealism . . . by the conception of the world of human selves as the Great Community, the literally personal object of moral loyalty."<sup>1</sup> Loyalty to the moral and spiritual needs of the "selves" (the persons) who live together in communities and know each other well, under the governance of Almighty God, the Supreme Person Who creates, sustains, and orders all—this is the churches' co-operative task. The moral loyalty of the staff of the church must center here, "till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto mature manhood, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

The philosophical basis for a functional theory of community organization begins with the fact of the churches' oneness in their faith in Jesus Christ. It reaches out to the persons whom God has created to dwell together in geographical communities in order that they may know each other well as sons and daughters of God. Their needs, their hopes, their aspirations are the determiners of function. Moral loyalty to these needs is the discipline of the churches' co-operative work. Organizational patterns and ecclesiastical strategy alike should be prophetically modified and shaped in accordance with such needs. When the churches are loyally committed to the goal of meeting the moral and spiritual needs of all the people, Christian unity has relevance to the community.

Our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation. In establishing it under God, they dedicated themselves and their children to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The splendor our fathers loved is still with us. The spirit that makes men free to worship their God, to glory in the fruits of their labor, to build their homes, and to nurture their children under the over-arching providence of God, is our common heritage. The cities and factories and farms of American communities remain intact, unscarred by war's devastation. Today they are bursting with new masses, new technologies, new religious fervor, new life. Standing as America does, literally on the threshold

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1. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article by Wm. E. Hocking, Vol. 19, p. 601.

of the new era in atomic, electronic, and human relations, against the background of the America that is, what does God want His churches to do with these unprecedented opportunities? We do not know the answer fully. But, as Henry Luce has said, "Only a church which has thought very deeply and very exactly about what God wants His American children to do . . . can guide the American people in its discovery."

Such thinking is central in the churches' co-operative ministry. The setting in which churches must seek earnestly to apprehend God's purpose for His churches is the geographical community. There is a "givenness" about community. The hand of God can be discerned in their creation. The purposes of God are primarily relevant where people live. Christian unity helps the churches to become a creative and redemptive force in community life.

The needs of community require an authentic Protestant answer. It will not be uniform; it cannot be proclaimed dogmatically; nor can it be formulated by some ecclesiastical or board agency and then authoritatively proclaimed from headquarters. Rather the answer must come through the apprehending of God's will by groups of His people gathered in many places from many communions who stand within the ebb and flow of community need and who are attentive to the "still small voice" that becomes discernible to those who earnestly seek Him. The conciliar movement represents the churches' responsible effort to co-ordinate these insights and to marshal these resources for the more effective mission and ministry of the churches. In this way Christian unity is made relevant to the community.

## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX I

### COPY OF LETTER

Worcester, Mass.  
February 14, 1955

Dear Sir:

A good many church members cannot understand why we are not informed as to what the National Council of Churches are trying to accomplish and also what they have done each year.

Some one told me that a booklet is published in regard to this, but if this is true, why is it we are never told about it in our churches? If they do not publish such a booklet or magazine, what is the reason?

The only way we ever know what is being done is by reading our newspaper, which is not published very often. (*The Articles*)

How can we be as interested in the National or State Council of Churches when we do not know what they are doing?

We cannot blame some for saying they are dead, so to speak, when they never hear anything.

We would be glad to subscribe to such a magazine if told about it. Please have our local councils inform us about this through our ministers, and please excuse me for not signing my name, as I do not want to offend any one. I feel we should know what is going on so as to give our support.

Thank you.

If for any reason they feel it is best not to issue such a magazine, it seems we should be informed of this through our pastors or church paper.

P. S. Why not have suggestion boxes installed in every church, so members would have a chance to offer advice on how conditions could be improved upon and make us feel we had a voice in the affairs of the church instead of waiting for the annual meetings? It certainly could do no harm, but on the other hand would do a lot of good.

Industry has a great deal of success with such a system, and I honestly believe stores, city and state government, schools, etc., would gain by it.

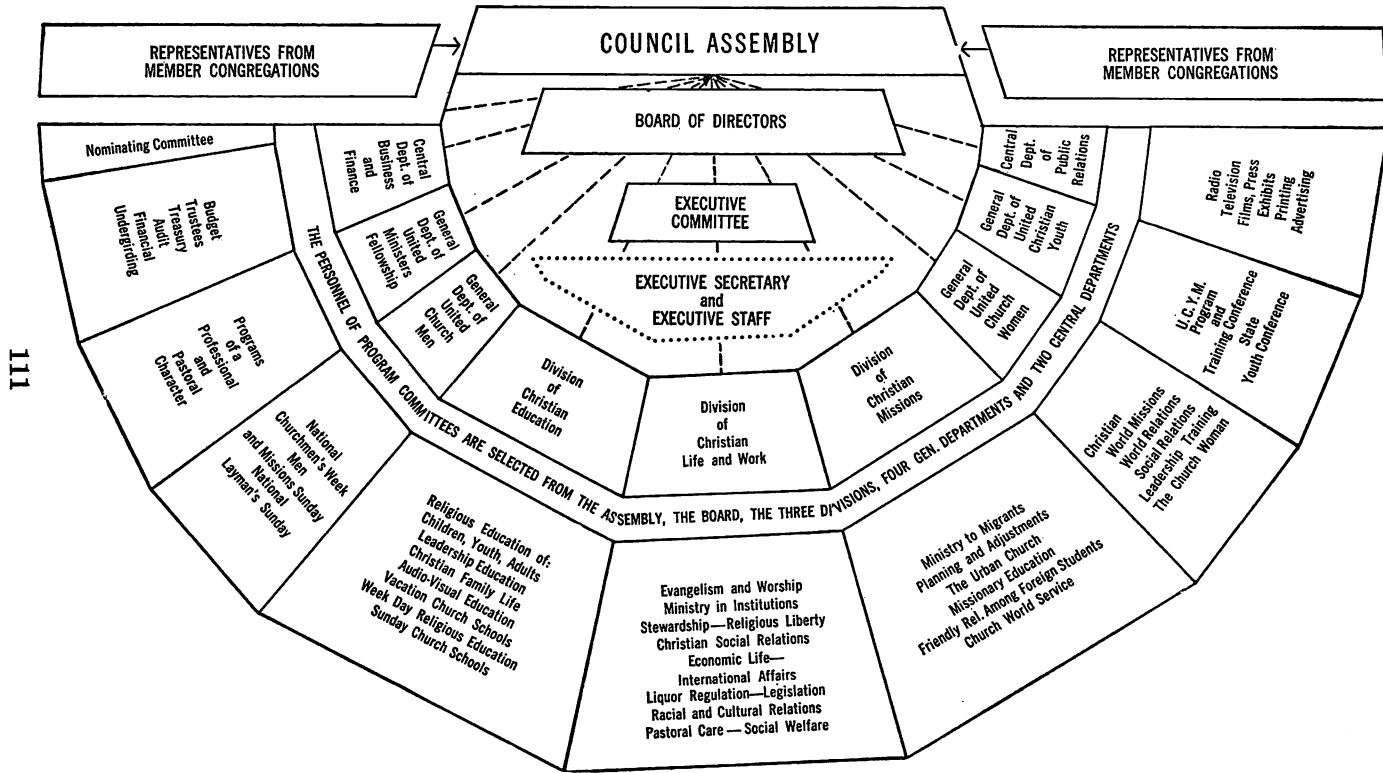
Many ministers wonder why more people do not go to church, etc., so give us a chance to offer suggestions. Some churches only have one supper a year. How can you get acquainted this way? Some don't even have a Sick Committee or, if they do, only make visits once a month. Some don't even have a Bible Class for adults or a Sunday evening sermon. The council of churches in each city should have one by having turns.

These are only a few suggestions, but please give us a chance to offer more.

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Signature

# APPENDIX II

GENERAL ORGANIZATION CHART FOR THE  
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
(Name of City)

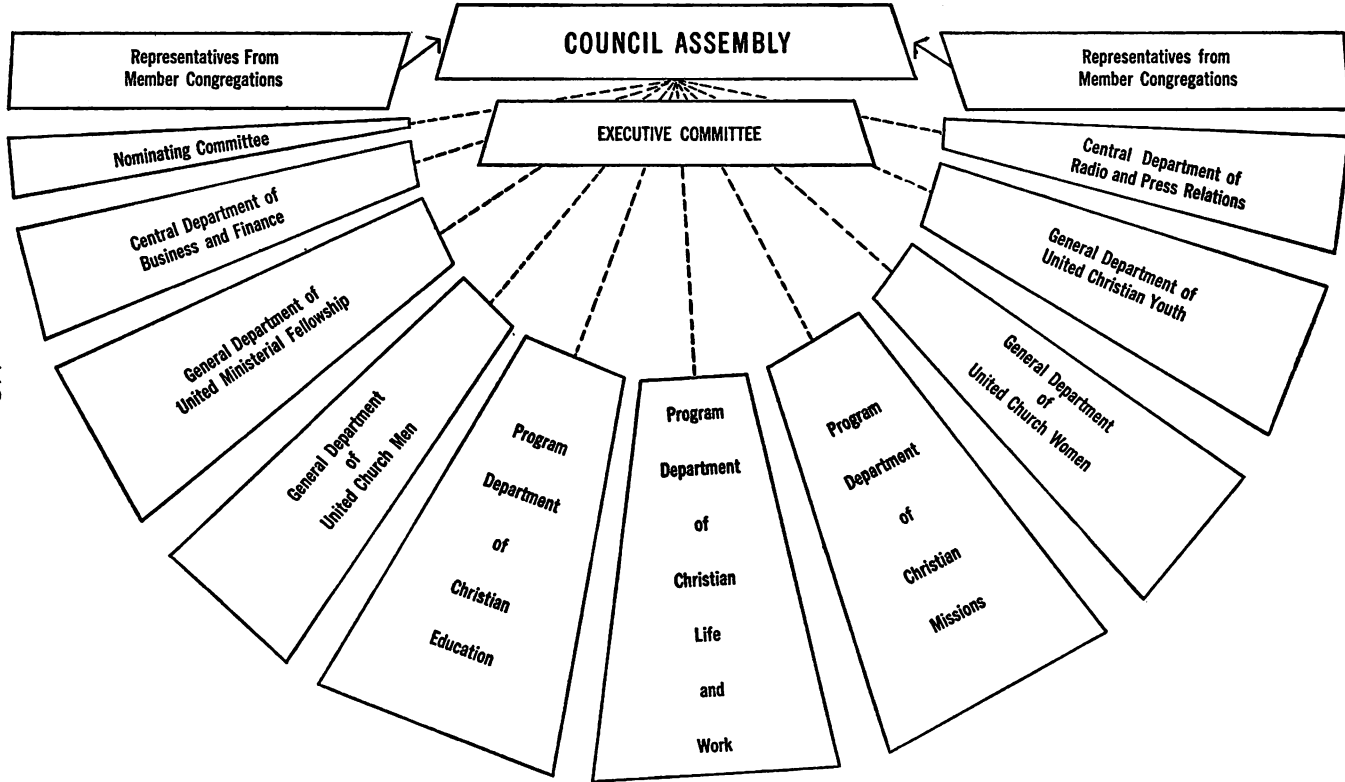


TYPE I



# APPENDIX III

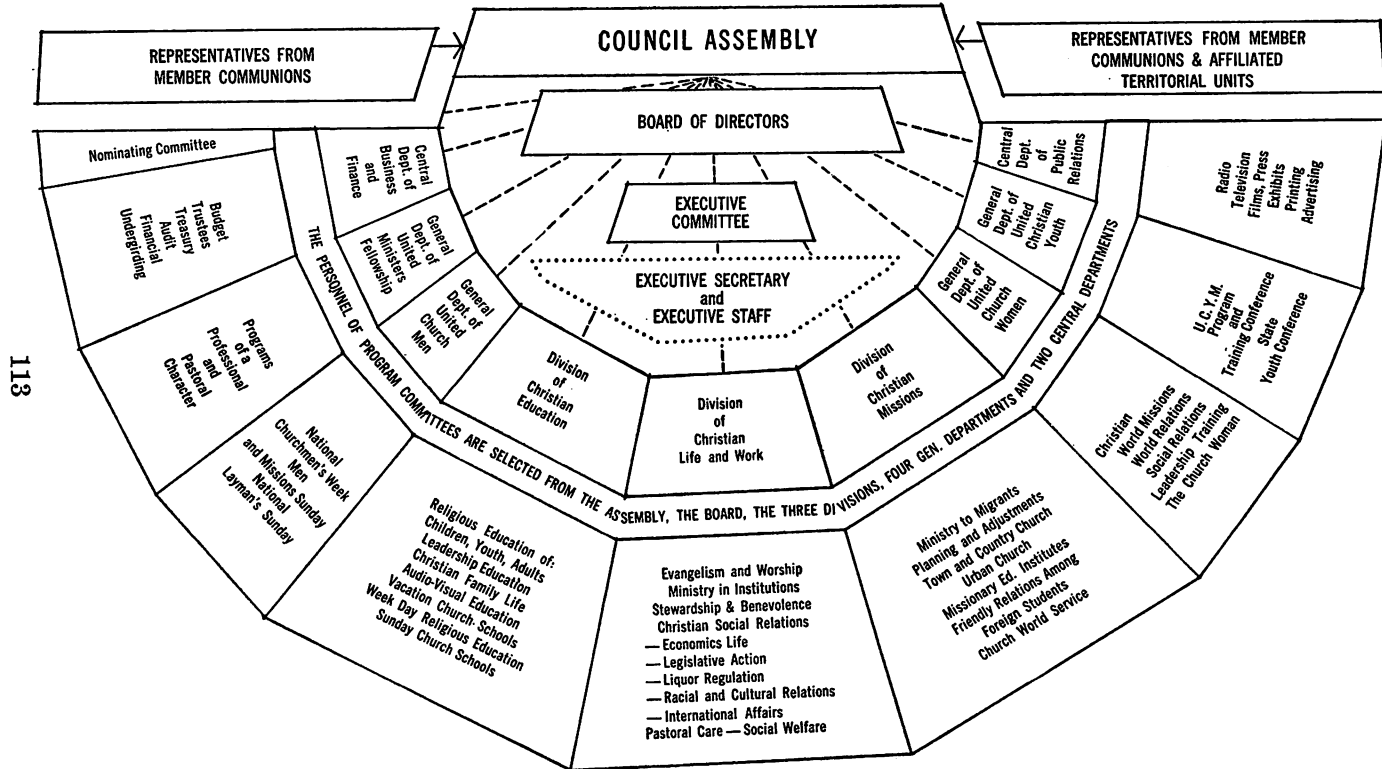
GENERAL ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE  
.....COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
(Name)



# APPENDIX IV

GENERAL ORGANIZATION CHART

.....COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
(Name of State)



TYPE III

## APPENDIX V

# LOCAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES—STAFF TITLES

Frequency		Frequency	
113	Executive Secretary -----		Associate Director, Religious Education -----
23	Executive Director -----	3	Associate Director in charge of Christian Education -----
3	Assistant to Executive -----	1	Secretary of Christian Education -----
12	Secretary -----	1	Supervising Teacher, Weekday Christian Education -----
13	Director -----	1	Assistant Director, Weekday Religious Education -----
1	Executive Vice-President -----	73	Teachers, Weekday Religious Education -----
1	Administrative Secretary -----	5	Instructors, Released Time Classes -----
1	Secretarial Assistant -----	1	Secretary of Women's Work --
3	General Secretary -----	1	Director of Women's Work --
1	Executive Minister -----	2	Director, United Church Women Executive, Council of Church Women -----
1	Council Minister -----	2	Director of Youth Work -----
1	Advisor -----	1	Director of Youth -----
2	Field Secretary -----	1	Director of Youth Service Bureau -----
1	Superintendent Rural Work --	1	Director of Children's Work --
1	Rural Field Worker -----	1	Director of Children's Work and Leadership Training --
1	Minister-at-large -----	1	Director of Program -----
1	Associate Director -----	1	Recreation Director and Youth Assistant -----
3	Associate Secretary -----	4	Director, Public Relations -----
1	Associate Executive -----	1	Director of Publicity -----
2	Assistant Executive Secretary --	1	Director of Publicity and Public Relations -----
1	Executive Assistant -----	1	Secretary, Department of Public Relations -----
1	Associate Secretary -----	1	Director of Information and Referral -----
1	Associate Secretary and Director of Children's Work --	2	Director of Research and Planning -----
1	Associate Secretary of United Church Women -----	1	Secretary, Research and Planning -----
1	Assistant General Secretary --	1	Secretary of Research and Planning -----
1	Associate Secretary, Social Work -----	1	Director, Survey and Analysis -----
1	Associate Secretary, Radio and Publicity -----	1	Director, Church Research and Planning -----
1	Associate Secretary, Business and Finance -----	1	Director, Department of Church and Community -----
1	Associate Director on Use and Understanding of the Bible -----	1	Director, Extension -----
3	Administrative Assistant -----	1	Director, Town and Country --
1	Office Executive -----	6	Director, Social Service -----
1	Supervisor of Leadership Education -----	1	Director of Church Welfare Bureau -----
1	Director, Dept. of Christian or Religious Education -----	1	Director, Social Welfare -----
21	Assistant Director of Religious Education -----		
1	Director, Weekday Religious Education -----		
9	Supervisor, Weekday Church School -----		
9	Consultant in Christian Education -----		
1	Secretary, Weekday Christian Education -----		
1	Associate Secretary, Religious Education -----		
1	Supervisor of Weekday Schools -----		

	Frequency
Director, Division of Social Service -----	1
Executive Secretary, Department of Social Service ---	1
Social Worker -----	2
Social Work Supervisor -----	1
Director, Council of Church Women and Social Service	1
Director, Christian Social Relations -----	2
Assistant Director, Christian Social Relations -----	1
Director, Case Work -----	1
Case Workers -----	2
Family Service Worker -----	1
Director, Audio Visual -----	4
Director of Music -----	1
Director of Church Music ---	1
Director, Radio and TV -----	1
Director of Group Work -----	1
Director, Intergroup Relations Group Worker -----	1
Executive Director, Religious Radio and TV -----	1
Radio Co-ordinator -----	1
Hospital Chaplains -----	10
Chaplain to Hospitals -----	1
Chaplains -----	8
Director of Chaplaincy -----	1
Executive Director & Chaplain (Youth Service Staff) -----	1
Institutional Chaplain -----	2
Prison Chaplain -----	1
Court Chaplain -----	1
Chaplain, Juvenile Court -----	1
Hospital and Court Chaplain --	1
Co-operating Chaplain -----	2
Scout Chaplain -----	1
College Chaplains -----	3
Protestant Chaplains -----	2
Chaplain, County Homes -----	4
Chaplain, County Jail -----	2
Chaplain, Reformatory -----	1
Hospital Visitor -----	1
Director, Institutional Ministry	1
Ministry in Institutions -----	1
Court Representative -----	1
Morals Court Workers -----	1
Court Counsellor -----	1
Chaplain, Parental School -----	1
Chaplain, Research and Educational Hospital -----	1

	Frequency
Chaplain, County Jail and House of Correction -----	1
Director, Ministry to Migrants	1
Supervisor, Migrant Work ---	1
Migrant Supervisor -----	1
Trailer Hauler -----	1
Director, Men in Service -----	1
Hostess, Servicemen's Center -	1
Center Program Director -----	1
Director, Work with Armed Forces and Institutional Ministry -----	1
Director, Service Commission of the Churches -----	1
Director, Civic Affairs -----	1
Director, United Church Overseas Relief -----	1
Director, United Church Committee on Indian Work ---	1
Director of Interchurch Activities -----	1
Director of Friendship House -	1
Director, Larger Parishes ----	5
Superintendent, Big Sisters Home -----	1
Superintendent, Parkway Day Care Center -----	1
Superintendent, Memorial Community Center -----	1
Director, Worship and the Fine Arts -----	1
Teacher in High School and Pastor of Parish -----	1
Director of College Work ---	1
Promotion Secretary -----	1
Film Librarian -----	1
Religious Film Librarian -----	1
Director, Family Life Education	1
Secretary of Community Service -----	1
Secretary of Promotion -----	1
Director of Finance -----	1
Financial Secretary -----	1
Financial Secretary and Treasurer -----	1
Director, Business and Finance	1
Business Manager -----	1
Director, Business Affairs ---	1
Comptroller -----	1
Executive Secretary, Churchmen -----	1
Student Worker -----	1
Editor, Protestant Church Life	1

## APPENDIX VI

# STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES—STAFF TITLES

	Frequency		Frequency
Executive Secretary -----	25	Director of Publicity -----	1
Executive Director -----	4	Press Consultant -----	1
General Secretary -----	8	Rural Field Worker -----	1
Executive Vice-President -----	2	Staff minister-at-large -----	1
State Superintendent -----	1	Minister Co-ordinator in De-	
Associate General Secretary --	7	fense Communities -----	1
Associate Secretary -----	1	Director, Work with the Armed	
Associate Executive Secretary	3	Forces and Institutional	
Assistant to Executive Director	1	Ministry -----	1
Assistant Executive Director --	1	Badger, Christian Fellowship	
Assistant to Executive Secre-		Director -----	1
tary -----	1	Director, Women's Work ----	2
Assistant Executive Secretary		Consultant in Men's Work ---	1
and Director of Christian		Director, Town and Country --	1
Social Relations -----	1	Director, Rural Church Insti-	
Assistant Executive Secretary		tute (Town and Country	
and Director of Public Re-		Division) -----	1
lations, Youth Work -----	1	Director of CROP -----	4
Executive Secretary, Depart-		State CROP Director -----	1
ment of Youth Work -----	1	Director, United Church Over-	
Executive Secretary, Depart-		seas Relief -----	1
ment of United Church		Director of Church World	
Women -----	1	Service -----	2
Executive Secretary, Depart-		CROP Field Director -----	1
ment of Children's Work --	1	Assistant to Director of CROP	1
Executive Secretary, Division of		Assistant to Director of Church	
Social Relations -----	1	World Service -----	1
Executive Secretary, Division		Director of Communications --	1
of Town and Country		Director of Heifer Project ----	1
Churches -----	1	Director of Use and Under-	
Office Manager -----	1	standing of the Bible -----	1
Administrative Assistant -----	2	Director of Church and Com-	
Director of Adult Work and		munity Music -----	1
Field Organization -----	1	Director of Church Music ----	1
Director of Youth Work -----	1	Director of Social Welfare ----	1
Young People's Work -----	1	Social Relations -----	2
Leadership Education -----	1	Financial Secretary -----	1
Assistant in Christian Educa-		Financial Consultant -----	1
tion -----	1	Director, Department Research	
Director, Christian Education		and Strategy -----	1
Department -----	2	Assistant Director, Research	
Director, Religious Education		and Strategy -----	1
Department -----	1	Director, Research and Plan-	
Director, Christian Education --	2	ning -----	1
Consultant in Christian Educa-		Director, Research -----	1
tion -----	1	Director, Extension -----	1
Director of Children's Work --	2	Director, Audio-Visuals -----	1
Supervisor, Weekday Religious		Managing Editor -----	1
Education -----	1	Office Manager -----	1
Director, Weekday Religious		Office Secretary -----	1
Education -----	1	Supervisor, Migrant Work ----	1
Director of Public Relations --	3	Director, Ministry to Migrants	1
Secretary, Department of Pub-		Minister to Migrants -----	1
lic Relations -----	1		

	Frequency
Director, Agricultural Migrant Work -----	1
Director, Migrant Work -----	3
"Goodwill Booklets" -----	2
Chaplain -----	1
Hospital Chaplains -----	3

	Frequency
Director of Christian Social Relations -----	1
Assistant Director of Christian Social Relations -----	1
Treasurer and Office Manager	1
Director, Business and Finance	1
Director, Radio and Television	1



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